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Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

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**Cutting the Cord
on Uplighting**

**Build Your Own
DJ Computer
System, Pt 2**

How to Build WOW

**Unique Mixing Ideas
Ways to Differentiate
Practice Techniques
Branding**

**David Moricca and Mixify
Virginia's Astro Entertainment**

Last Minute MBLV17 Update



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As much as I try to avoid clichés as a general practice (which I've mentioned before), occasionally an overused expression puts up a good fight to avoid being replaced by some other way of saying the same thing. Case in point: WOW.

From the earliest days of *Mobile Beat*, the elusive "wow factor" has been a topic for many writers seeking to help entertainers find unique ways to program, perform, do marketing and sales, and a host of other activities related to the DJ profession. Obviously the never-ending flow of such material points to an ever-present need that seriously entrepreneurial entertainers have: that of somehow standing out in the perennial crowd of competitors.

How to build WOW? Let us count the ways... Matt Blank takes a fresh look at dinner-hour music mixing; Rob Johnson pitches a talent contest concept; Mike Ficher shows how the iconic Grateful Dead can teach us something about the "next level" of branding; Arnoldo Offermann takes a proactive approach to building positive perceptions; and we talk to David Moricca about Mixify, an online portal connecting DJs and audiences in a totally new way.

Plus, two writers look at how behind-the-scenes activities can impact your wow factor: Jason Weldon preaches the benefits of the reading habit; and Stu Chisholm makes a good case for the truth of the adage "practice makes perfect."

The importance of standing out from the crowd in the realm



of business cannot be underestimated. In this issue, Stephanie Padovani describes how telling the right story can help you connect better with brides; John Stiernberg turns some "resolutions" into a solid plan for reevaluating and reinvigorating your business for 2013; and Jeffrey Gitomer talks about going way beyond expectations.

The Mobile Beat Show is our way of giving legs to the great advice we dole out in each magazine. At the Vegas event, you have, in our opinion, the best opportunity to learn new things, obtain new products, engage new services, and generally find an incredible number of ways to help you raise your wow factor to the highest volume possible. If you still haven't made plans to attend, there's still time...don't miss out! In this issue, you can check out some wisdom from show keynote speaker Jon Acuff and a great discussion with evening headliner, Lou Gramm, "the voice of Foreigner."

When it comes to our trade show, we regularly hear from complainers who say the show is the "same every year," and use that as their excuse not to attend. But I wonder if that attitude is really just a way to avoid the effort required to develop a truly unique DJ service. Yes, we certainly offer similar seminar topics from year to year, along with whatever exciting, cutting edge concepts we can find. However, it's really about one's attitude going into it: True professionals are always looking for—and finding—ways to boost their own wow factor, wherever they may be.

- Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief

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New from Mobile Beat: Must-Have Book for Mastering School Dances

Mobile Beat has released a great new resource for entertainers interested in the youth event market: ***R U Rockin' With the Best?!*** by Arnoldo Offermann, a dedicated to helping DJs "master school dances." Based on the wildly successful *Master School Dances* video series, this 120+ page book gives readers an insider's look into what it takes to truly become the market leader for school dances...and how to stay there.

If you've seen the video series, you know there are tons of anecdotes and tangents full of extra tips, stories to learn from, and just overall craziness that is part of the school dance business. This book chronicles 4SchoolsOnly's 2012 homecoming season, demonstrating what keeps 4SO on top of the game, and helping you become and maintain your own position as a market leader. This is not a replacement of the video series, but rather a standalone educational tool.

Go to <http://masterschooldances.com/book> for more info on the book.

About the author: Arnoldo Offermann has been a driving force in taking a bleak and depressed Florida market saturated with \$395 school DJs and turning it on its head, setting a standard for

what a school dance should be, with dances from \$2,000 to \$15,000+. After many requests to share his secrets, he created the *Master School Dances* video series, which has helped DJs across the globe become leaders in their local youth event markets.

Offermann has been profiled in Mobile Beat's ProDJ Files, and is now a current print columnist and online DJU professor at MobileBeat.com. He has also been a featured speaker on the MBLV Tour and a seminar presenter at Mobile Beat Vegas 2012.

For MBLV17, coming up in February 2013, he is being sponsored by American DJ to present the seminar "Getting the Most Excitement Out of Your Lights." He has also been a featured speaker at many other DJ events and other conferences. More information can be found at www.arnoldooffermann.com.



MBLV17

Mobile Beat Vegas News

Along with previously announced *sponsored sessions by American DJ, DigiGames, European Body Art, BrideLive and Open Air Photobooth, the following exhibitors will be hosting extra sessions.



CHAUVET® DJ - Lighting and Special Effects: The Ultimate Upsell... - A seminar providing mobile

entertainers with hundreds of tips to earn the most profit at every gig, by upselling lighting and special effects. Stop by and see the latest, must-have gear in action, get concrete examples of optimal mobile applications and let the best in the industry teach you how to easily increase your revenue.



DJ Trivia - Weekday Wages: Making Money Every Week! - Dave Wyatt started his DJ business

in 1987 on a part-time basis. In the mid-'90s he acquired a local competitor and expanded as a multi-op company. He has taken his business and his income (52 weeks a year) to the next level. Come listen to his story and see how you too can learn to earn a steady, weekly, livable income.



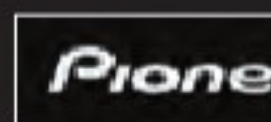
WED Guild Open House - Join us for our second

Wedding Entertainment Directors Guild open house, with a special bonus presentation by Randy Bartlett: "How to Get Applause Every Time...Secrets of Timing and Delivery." We'll also be sharing tips to assist you in the WED Guild application process and, of course, giving away a few goodies!



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Pioneer DJ - See and hear the latest in

Pioneer DJ gear for 2013, fresh from the NAMM show; plus, more content to be announced.

[*Sponsored seminars are meant to promote products but also offer a wealth of info to supplement the regular seminars.]

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Mobile Beat Vegas News

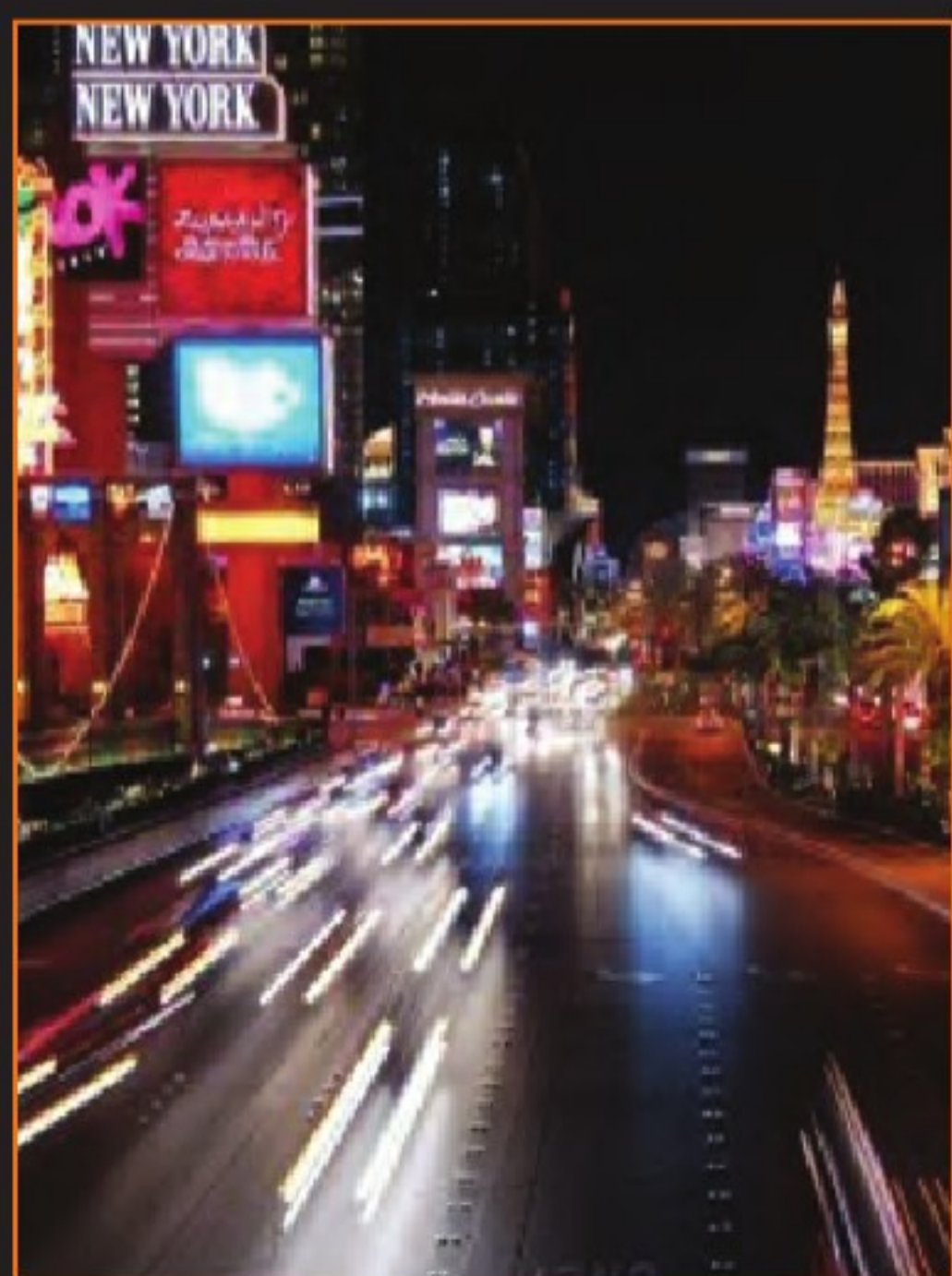
Reality Check Series Presents "God Meets The Mobile DJ" with special guest Vince Antonucci

Perhaps you don't give a higher power much thought. Or you assume that's only for the religious holier-than-thou types. But what if God is real, and really for you? What if God is for the Mobile DJs? And what if having him in your life and career can make a real difference? Join us as we dive into these important life issues.

The session will be led by Vince Antonucci, a Las Vegas pastor, author and stand-up comedian on Thursday, February 7 from 10:30-11:30 AM in Skybox 206 at the Riviera Hotel. Raised by a Jewish mother and abandoned by his professional pok-



er-playing father, Antonucci became a Christian in college by trying to prove the Bible isn't true. When he finally went to church, he was disappointed to discover a "boring, stale religion." He is now the pastor of Verve, a church for people who work on and live around the Vegas Strip. Through provocative storytelling and raw honesty, Antonucci will challenge you to move past spiritual boredom into a faith that's exciting, beautiful, and powerful.



MBLV17

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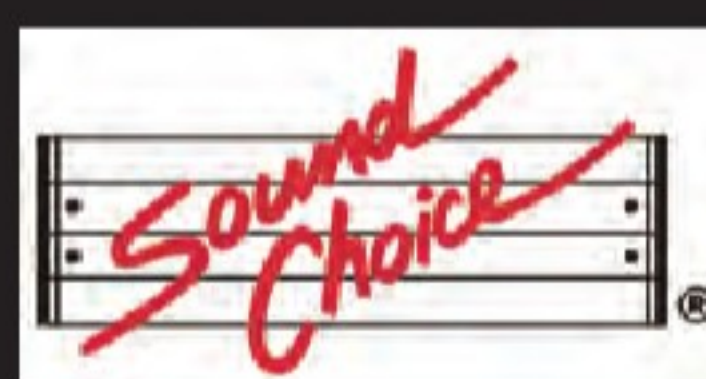
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Viral Booth

The Sensational System Giveaway

At 3:00 PM on Thursday, February 7, at the end of MBLV17, Mobile Beat will be giving away a treasure trove of prizes to lucky DJs, including the grand finale: The Sensational System Giveaway! To win the system, you must be registered for the show, and you must be in the room when your name is called! Don't miss this great chance to go home with a truck load of gear and get some great music and services!

Lighting: ADJ • Jelly Par Profile System • An exciting all-in-one LED Par system for any mobile entertainer, featuring four RGB color mixing LED fixtures. Each fixture features a translucent plastic casing that glows and changes colors, and uses long-life (50,000 hrs), 109 x 10mm 12-watt LEDs to produce bright color washes.



DJ Media Controller: Pioneer DJ • XDJ-AERO • The industry's first Wi-Fi DJ system enables users to mix tracks stored on their smart devices wirelessly, as well as on USB memory devices and computers, via included rekordbox software. The XDJ-AERO can also create its own wireless access point when Wi-Fi isn't available. Bonus: Winner also receives a set of Pioneer HDJ-1500K Headphones.

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Lou Gramm: The Voice of Foreigner

THROUGH STARDOM AND TRIAL BY FIRE, THE SINGER STILL ROCKS

By Ryan Burger

Lou Gramm's voice is one of the things that comes to mind for most people when the topic of "classic rock" arises. His high tenor cuts easily through the loudness, providing the clear signature of one of rock's iconic bands, Foreigner.

Since the band's debut in 1977 with an album that sold more than four million copies, the group has been a mainstay on classic rock radio. That eponymous album spawned Top 20 hits like "Feels Like The First Time," "Cold As Ice," and "Long, Long Way From Home." An even more successful follow-up, *Double Vision*, brought us "Hot Blooded," "Double Vision," and "Blue Morning, Blue Day." The 1981 release, *Foreigner 4* yielded "Waiting For A Girl Like You" and 1984's *Agent Provocateur* gave us "I Want to Know What Love Is," both ballads that have filled many a dance floor with slowly swaying couples. All told, Foreigner has sold over 50 million records worldwide. And on his own, Rochester, New York native Lou Gramm had his biggest hit with "Midnight Blue," from his 1987 solo release, *Ready or Not*.

Fast-forward to 1997, when Gramm was diagnosed with a dangerous brain tumor. Although it had been designated "inoperable" by others, an eighteen-hour surgery by an innovative Boston doctor saved his life. A long and difficult recovery followed, during which Gramm took his final bows with Foreigner.

Fast-forward again, and 2009 saw Gramm releasing a self-titled album with his new outfit, The Lou Gramm Band. It rocks hard while also revealing the singer's newfound commitment to Christianity.

Mobile Beat Publisher Ryan Burger had the chance to talk with this true rock star, who will grace the stage at the quickly approaching Mobile Beat Las Vegas DJ Show, this February.

Ryan Burger: We're here with a true legend of the music industry—

Lou Gramm, best known as the voice of Foreigner. He had his days with Foreigner, making all kinds of fantastic albums, then a great solo career that he's still jamming on, and, most important to us at the moment, he's going to appear—and rock the house—with the Lou Gramm Band at Mobile Beat Las Vegas. Lou, give us the one-minute version of how you got into the realm of music.

Lou Gramm: Well, it's real simple. Both of my parents were in music. My dad



played trumpet in his own big band in the mid to late 1940s and my mom was the singer. That's how they met and fell in love. They were married and had three children, and all of us are proficient with our own instruments.

R B: Anybody else go in a similar direction as you did, or did they all have their own different styles that they got from mom and dad?

L G: Well, I think they had their own different styles. But at one point we all played together. My brother Ben still plays drums with me.

R B: How did you end up in Foreigner? I mean, that's just a legendary band.

How did you end up getting hooked up with the other guys?

L G: It was kind of strange but it's true. I was in a band called Black Sheep. We had two albums on Capitol Records in the early to mid-seventies. Our manager happened to work for A&M Records. We would see all the local groups that would come to Rochester that were signed to A&M Records.

We happened to see Spooky Tooth, and Mick Jones was playing with Spooky Tooth at the time. So I was introduced to him and gave him the two Black Sheep albums. In about a year, maybe a year and a half later, when he had enough Spooky Tooth and was forming the band that became Foreigner, he apparently auditioned over 30 people for the lead singer slot; he remembered hearing my Black Sheep records, and ended up calling me and asking me to come to New York to audition for this band.

I thanked him but I told him no, because I was still loyal to Black Sheep. But right after the call, our equipment truck slid off the New York State Thruway and most of our equipment was destroyed. So the guys in Black Sheep told me, hey, listen, why don't you go audition with this band; maybe something good will happen for you, you know? So reluctantly I did.

R B: Sounds like a bit of a God thing; he was telling you that you needed to be with Foreigner, at least for a while.

L G: Yep. I can believe that.

R B: Very cool. Do you have a favorite song out of all of your hits with Foreigner? I know there are enough to fill multiple greatest hits albums, but if you had to pick one to be remembered by out of all of them, which track would it be?

L G: I think "Juke Box Hero"...I basically had the impetus to begin writing

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the song and then had some help, of course. But it's my baby.

R B: You guys were a heavily touring band, weren't you?

L G: Yes, we were.

R B: And the lifestyle on the road, I've heard all kinds of stories about that...

L G: You can believe only 99 percent of them.

R B: How about when you went off on your own? When I was working in radio, we were playing your solo tracks, because that was my generation of music. What led you to step out on your own? Did you just want more creative control?

L G: Well, as time went by, I was becoming a pretty proficient writer, and in a lot of the Foreigner tracks Mick wouldn't give me any creative room. He kept the



reins very tight. So when it was time to record a new Foreigner album, I started presenting him with my ideas for songs.

He basically turned them down, saying that they weren't up to snuff for Foreigner.

And it got to the point where I was not contributing very much to the Foreigner albums creatively, because Mick was completely taking the reins on all levels. So the only way that I knew that I was going to get my ideas heard, and kind of quantify that I can also write good songs, was to do my own album. And so I went to Atlantic Records and they agreed. And I think end of '86, early '87 the *Ready or Not* album came out.

R B: I asked you for your favorite Foreigner track. How about your favorite solo track?

L G: Well, there's quite a few, but I really like "Midnight Blue."

R B: I understand you've gone through some illness and different stuff in your life. But you look like you're doing great and your voice sounds as good as ever. How has that all affected your lifestyle and your recording career?



L G: Well, I had a non-cancerous brain tumor removed in 1997, but it was the size of a large egg and it had already done damage to my pituitary. I sent MRIs to a number of doctors who were considered some of the best, and they all said it was inoperable, so it was pretty depressing.

And I happened to hear about a Dr. Black at Brigham and Women's Hospital through a segment on *20/20*. He's the purveyor of laser surgery, which is more precise and able to get at tumors that are normally considered inoperable. So I sent my MRIs to him and he said he would operate on it and asked me to leave the next day for Boston. And I did. They took more MRIs and about 4:30 the following morning I was on the operating table. It was that close.

R B: He said, we've got to do this now or you may not be singing...wow.

L G: Yeah. True.

R B: Your Christian album caught my attention a couple of years ago. How did that come about?

L G: Well, I gave my heart to the Lord around 1991, and that was the year that I finally won the battle against alcohol and drugs and went to a real fine rehab, Hazelden, in Minneapolis. And I've been clean and sober for over 20 years now.

I certainly had believed in God all my life, but kept him at arm's length. When I needed him, oh, I called on him; when I didn't, I pushed him away a little bit, you know? And I decided that there was going to be no more of that. I knew I needed him to give me the strength to clean up my life because I certainly

knew that I didn't have the strength to do it. I came to terms with that.

It's an unbelievable life-changer. And I've got to tell you that my faith in the Lord had given me an incredible amount of strength, especially when I faced that brain tumor.

...so obviously after the operation and stuff I resumed touring with Foreigner for a few more years, but in the back of my mind I always knew that I wanted to do a Christian rock album to espouse my faith and to give thanks for being alive in a situation that can go a lot of different ways, potentially.

R B: Fantastic. Do you plan on releasing more material; continuing to tour? I mean, are you winding down; are you kind of jump-starting? What do you think the future holds.

L G: Well, the album's been out a couple of years. We play a few cuts of it live. We mostly play the big hits from Foreigner and the Lou Gramm solo albums. We play one or two things from the Christian album and maybe an old Beatles song. Of course we're still promoting it; we still sell it at shows and such, the Christian album, and very proud of it.

As of now we're just starting—as winter's starting to hunker down here—to get in the writing and recording mode again. So I'm hoping that there may be something next spring or early next summer.

R B: You described a bit of what your concert's going to be like for us. Can you give me anything more about what the mobile DJs are going to hear in Las Vegas coming up in February?

L G: You know, I think it's going to be the standard rockin' through the hits. That's kind of what people want; we aim to please, pretty much. It's not a sacrifice for us. We have a heck of a good time doing it. We shuffle the set around a little bit from show to show, but basically it's the big Foreigner and Lou Gramm hits, and back to back they sound unbelievable. **MB**





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We Want Salt Dreams, But Instead We Get Saffron

IT WILL NEVER BE COMMON...THE BEST THINGS AREN'T

By Jon Acuff



On almost every table, in every restaurant in America, you will find something. Salt. In almost every cupboard, in every home in America, you will find something. Salt. In every food court, in every mall in America, you will find something. Salt.

Though wars were fought over it in the past, there's no denying salt is now incredibly easy to get. It takes very little work to get salt. It's not difficult to acquire.

Most of us want our dreams to be like salt. Quick. Easy. Simple. With very little work involved. I am the same way.

Recently, when my friend Darcie pointed out a section of my new book that needed more clarity, my first thought wasn't "Hooray! I get to rewrite those pages and make them better!" No, my first thought was, "I can't do it! I'm out of words! You're wrong! I don't have to rewrite that part! This is too hard!"

I want the things I'm working on to be quick, easy and with very little work involved.

I want salt dreams.

Instead, I get saffron dreams, and those are very different.

Saffron is called the world's most exotic spice. It is planted, picked and sorted by hand. It's derived by pulling off the filaments of a crocus called *Crocus Sativus*. The crazy part? It takes 75,000 flowers to yield one pound of saffron. In other words, you have to hand pick 75,000 flowers to get one pound of saffron.

It is slow work. It is difficult work. The very thought of spending that much time for that little result seems ridiculous. But when you do, you end up with an incredibly powerful and rare spice.

A tiny pinch will color an entire pot of soup. A small amount will flavor an entire pound of rice. A microscopic amount can change an entire meal. You'll never find saffron on every table of every restaurant. It will never be common. The best things aren't.

And the best dreams are the same way. You will do hundreds of gigs before you get your "big break." You will play 1,000 more after your "big break." You will work late nights and early mornings for the chance to own your own business. You will play 100,000 songs for the hope of turning your DJ business into something bigger.

Along the way, you will have the chance to chase salt dreams or saffron dreams. Put the salt down. Always choose saffron. **MB**

*MBLV17 keynote speaker Jon Acuff is the Wall Street Journal best-selling author of *Quitter* and *Stuff Christians Like*. He speaks to businesses, colleges and nonprofits across the country. He lives with his family in Nashville, TN. Read his blog at jonacuff.com and follow him on Twitter @jonacuff.*



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Taking Aim at Talent Hunt

THERE IS A REASON WHY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE TUNING IN...

By Rob Johnson

I am always looking for the hottest trends and what people are really into. What can help me stand out from my competition and increase my bottom line? There is nothing hotter than reality television and talent contests like *American Idol*, *The X Factor* and *Americas Got Talent*. If you—and your audiences—love this kind of interactive entertainment, it is now possible to capitalize on the popularity of these shows and bring your game shows and events to a whole new level, with a variety show contest or team-building event.

America's Got Talent, *American Idol*, and other shows are extremely popular with millions of viewers. You can now bring the concept of performers, audience judging and voting together with this NEW and easy-to-use performer/judging management tool.

Talent Hunt makes it possible to use your DigiGames system to make you more Midweek Money than ever before.

Performers tell jokes, do a trick, sing, karaoke, magic... whatever they want. Meanwhile audience "judges" vote and Talent Hunt goes to work. After all entertainers have performed you announce the top performer.

The beauty of this concept is that it allows more people to participate, in their own way, according to their own comfort levels. Not everyone likes to be in front of the audience. Some will prefer to have their fun sitting back and judging the talent. Thus, Talent Hunt is a great way to increase a crowd at any venue each week with ongoing talent shows. It encourages audience

participation. More participation equals a better show for you.

Some of the main features of Talent Hunt are:

- Create fun variety shows where everyone displays their talent, regardless of what it is, or...
- Create a single purpose shows like: a "Best Joke Telling" contest, a karaoke contest, a sing-along contest, an air guitar/drum contest, a "Dumb Human Trick" contest, costume contests, magic shows, pageants, or many other contest styles. The options are only limited by your imagination.
- As few as two and as many as 25 judges can rate performers using a DigiGames wireless buzzer.
- As many as 50 performers can show off their talent in a single talent contest. Using DigiGames Trivia Cubes (TM-120), judges can "buzz" a performer.
- Using DigiGames Trivia Pads (TM-140), judges can "grade" a performance and also "buzz" the performer.
- The Announce Tool (Quick Text) allows you to instantly announce upcoming performers or make other visual text announcements on your presentation screen.
- Easily add entertainers or change the order of your performer's list. Talent Hunt supports audio files for music sing-a-longs and karaoke files for karaoke sing-off's (MP3+G and .zip karaoke).
- An easy "Accidental Judge Buzz" undo feature helps you manage the event.
- Control how many judge "buzzes" stop a performance.



Rob Johnson has hosted Trivia Parties and Game Shows for over 10 years. He is the current spokesperson for DigiGames and uses their equipment exclusively. He has performed throughout the United States, Europe and the Caribbean. Rob is also the owner of The

Music Man, Inc. and performs comedy stage hypnosis shows as The Hypno Man. He has also presented his "Midweek Money" seminar at multiple conferences and conventions including Mobile Beat, WEDJ, Wedding MBA, WedPro2011, ArmDJs, and various ADJA events. If you would like Rob to speak at your local event or demonstrate DigiGames gear to your group, contact him at 701-710-1657 or rob@digigames.com.



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You will have a fresh and unique format that no one else has and it's a great way to put people in the limelight. Talent Hunt also creates a new element to audience voting. You will be able to use this in multiple types of shows.

I have said many times that corporate events are my most successful and lucrative. Imagine pitching a corporation in your market on something they have never seen before...a team building exercise that will be fun for all involved. Every office has the "class clown" that will love to perform and be in the limelight. Every office also has their own "Simon Cowell" who will want to sit and judge the acts.

Corporates will likely pay big bucks for a team building activity and you can pitch it to them for that type of event. Meanwhile, bars and clubs are always looking for things to bring a crowd in for happy hour or a midweek activity. Contests not only bring in the contestants but generally each person brings their own cheering section to support them. This puts money in the bar's pocket, which, in turn, puts money in yours.

Contact me if you want to learn how to increase your bottom line by earning more MIDWEEK MONEY—right now! **MB**



Performer's Name	Media or Text	Browse	Delete
1 SUSANNE	Performing a Juggling Act		
2 PETER J.	Strange Body Trick		
3 SMITH CLAN	Doing a Minute to Win It Challenge		
4 JONES GROUP	Going Head to Head on Trivia Challenge		
5 ERICA AND KA...	Sing Along - Strawberry Wine		
6 DONNA AND L...	Dixie Chicks - Goodbye Earl zip		
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			

Save List Open List Clear List

Performers' Statistics:

Performer's Name	Points	Score	Buzzes
JOHN	275	125	3

DECLARE WINNER

Trivia Pads Trivia Cubes

A	B	C	D	Buzz
50	25	0	-25	-50

Stop Performance When: 3 Buzzes Occur

Start Voting Voting Deactivated

Total Number of Judges (1-25): 25

Show Judges' Results on Secondary Screen

Stay Tuned for Next Performances

Quick Text Font Settings

JUDGES' RESULTS:

1	2	3	4
0	50	50	25
5	6	7	8
0	0	25	-25
12	13	14	15
25	-50	-25	0
19	20	21	22
25	25	25	50
			-25
			0
			-50

MEDIA: Performing a Juggling Act
Current Performer: SUSANNE
Next Performer: PETER J.

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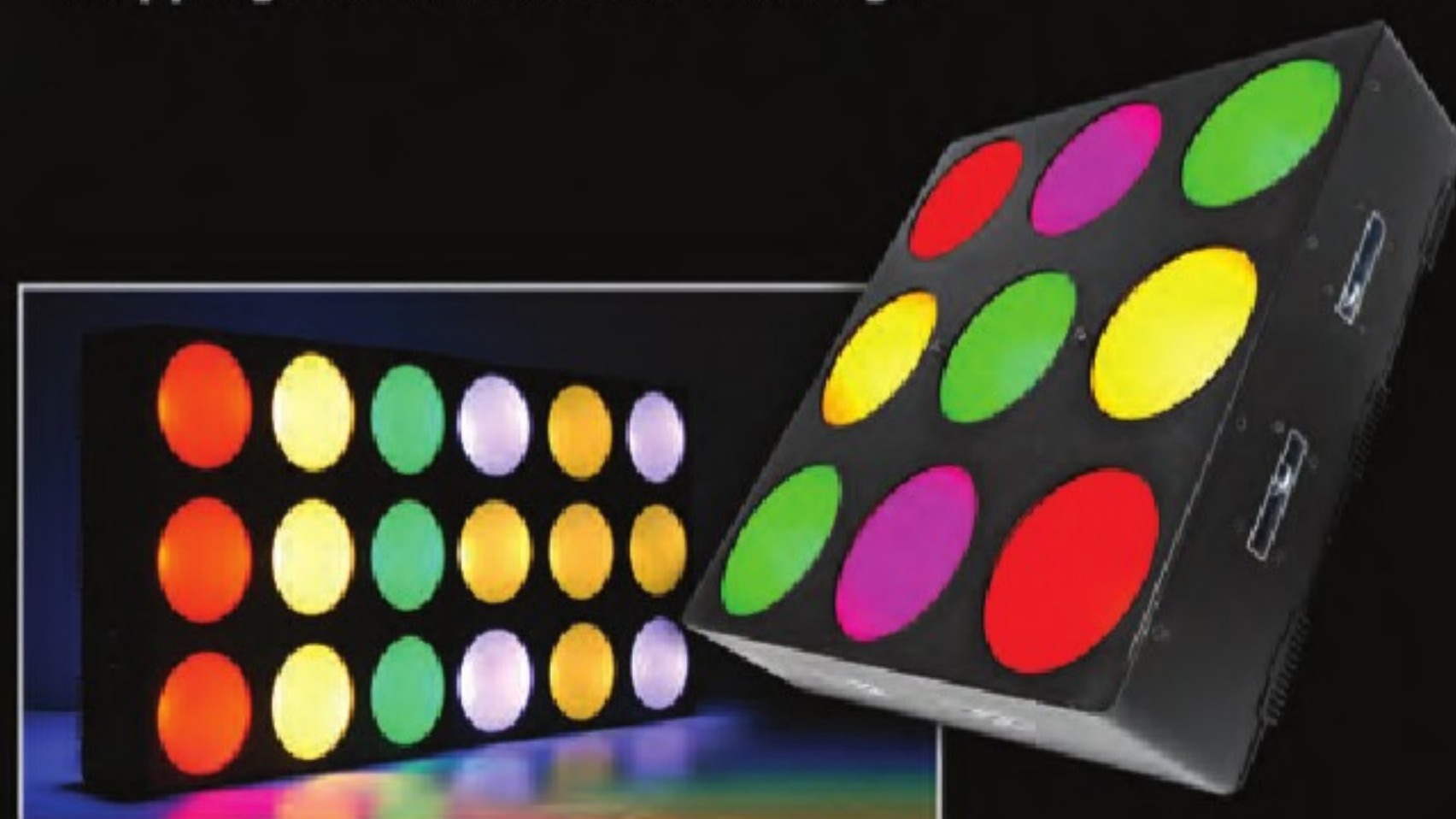


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Cutting the Cord on Uplighting

BATTERIES INCLUDED: ANOTHER WAY TO MAKE PAINTING WITH LIGHT A LITTLE EASIER

By Jim Weisz

Seems self-explanatory: The lights don't need to be plugged in, end of story. But there's a lot more to the benefits of wireless lights than just saving time.

It's Saturday afternoon and you have a wedding tonight. In addition to providing DJ services, the client has hired you to provide uplighting. For their particular venue, you know you'll need to set up 19 lights. As you sit on your couch trying to psych yourself up for the task that lies ahead, you dread the thought of being down on your hands and knees for an hour to an hour and a half putting down lights and taping down cords. Slowly a smile crawls across your face as you remember that was the past...Now your lights are totally wireless. So, there won't be any time down on your hands and knees tonight. In fact, you'll have your entire room of lighting set up in 20 minutes. That means you can enjoy another 30 minutes of relaxing on your couch before you head out for your wedding. The wireless life is nice.

CHOOSING YOUR FIXTURE

Just about every lighting manufacturer has a battery powered option these days. So you'll want to do your homework on what each manufacturer offers in terms of features. Over the course of a couple weeks, I looked at what each vendor had to offer and compared features and specs. Some were easy to rule out early on, like the lights with a short battery life or a low lux output. Other features were harder to sort out. Did I need wireless DMX? Did I want the light to have both white LEDs and amber LEDs? Or could I get by with just one or the other?

After spending all that time researching the options, I kept coming back to the same light: the CUBE 5 from Eternal Lighting (www.eternallighting.com). While it was the most expensive light I considered, it also had the best specs and features out of any light out there. When buying equipment for my DJ company, I try to buy the best possible components, so I know I am adding a quality piece of gear to my system. It also saves me money over time, since I don't have to upgrade nearly as often. With that said, I've been fortunate in realizing a good ROI on the lighting aspect of my business. If lighting had been a smaller part of my company, I might have considered a different fixture to recoup my investment faster.

BENEFITS OF GOING CORDLESS

Seems like this would be pretty self-explanatory—the lights don't need to be plugged in, end of story. But there's a lot more to the benefits of wireless lights than just saving time. Obviously a huge benefit is saving wear and tear on you. If you have a roadie or someone who sets up your lighting, wireless isn't going to be a huge benefit in this regard. However, if you are a solo act and have to set up all your gear, including lights, this can be an overlooked benefit.

Say it takes you 45 minutes to set up your sound system and 90 minutes to set up lighting. You've already done close to three hours of physical labor and the event hasn't even started yet! Surely you will be much fresher if you spend 20 minutes on setting up lights, rather than 90 minutes, not

to mention that wireless lights are significantly easier to set up.

While the lights will cost you more up front, you will save money on supplies over time. One expense you won't have, at least for your lights, is gaffers tape. Also, many of the wired lighting options come with cords that aren't that aren't very flexible and can be difficult to tape down. So you might need to buy replacement cords, which you wouldn't need with wireless lights.

It is important to note that even though the lights are wireless, it doesn't mean they have to lack versatility or programmability. In addition to the power aspect of wireless lights, you can control all of your lighting with the push of a button if you choose lights with built-in wireless DMX. I recently added a controller to my system so I can make my lights do some cool things during the dancing portion of the evening. My CUBE 5 lights also have the ability to control the other lights in my system. So I can assign one light as the master, pick it up and change the color of the entire room in just a couple seconds.

SELLING POINTS

Having wireless lights can be very appealing to your client if they want lights in a place that doesn't have power, like to illuminate an outside balcony at a venue, or to light up pillars without power outlets on them. Having a battery-powered lights will make your lights stand out to prospective clients who are looking for these kinds of solutions.

Wireless lights can also be appealing to the venue, because you don't have any cords to tape down. Even if the other vendors are using the most expensive gaffers tape available, you aren't using any. So there's no chance your tape can chip or peel their paint or have any effect on their carpet or flooring. For venues concerned with keeping their facility looking very nice, this is a reason they would probably want you at their venue with your battery powered lights.

SO, WHY NOT DITCH THE WIRES?

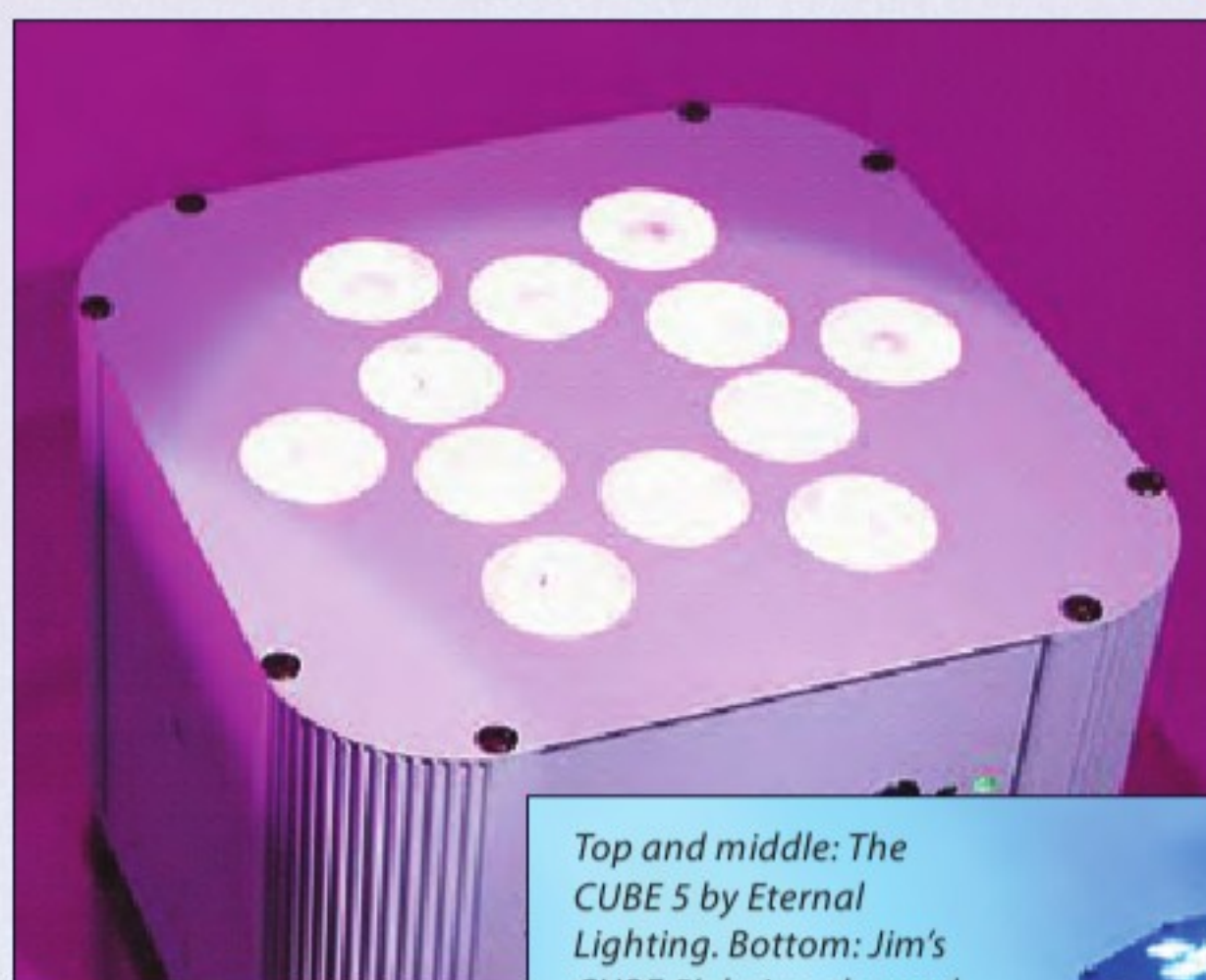
It may seem like battery powered lights have no faults, but they aren't perfect and there are some cons to going wireless. One such con is the fact that you have to charge the lights before each event. Some lights have a battery life of 10-20 hours, depending on what settings you have you're using. However, for my peace of mind, I charge my lights before every single event. This means unpacking, putting on my charging

station, charging overnight and then repacking them. It isn't very time intensive—I estimate it takes about 10 minutes for the whole process. But it is something that obviously needs to be done.

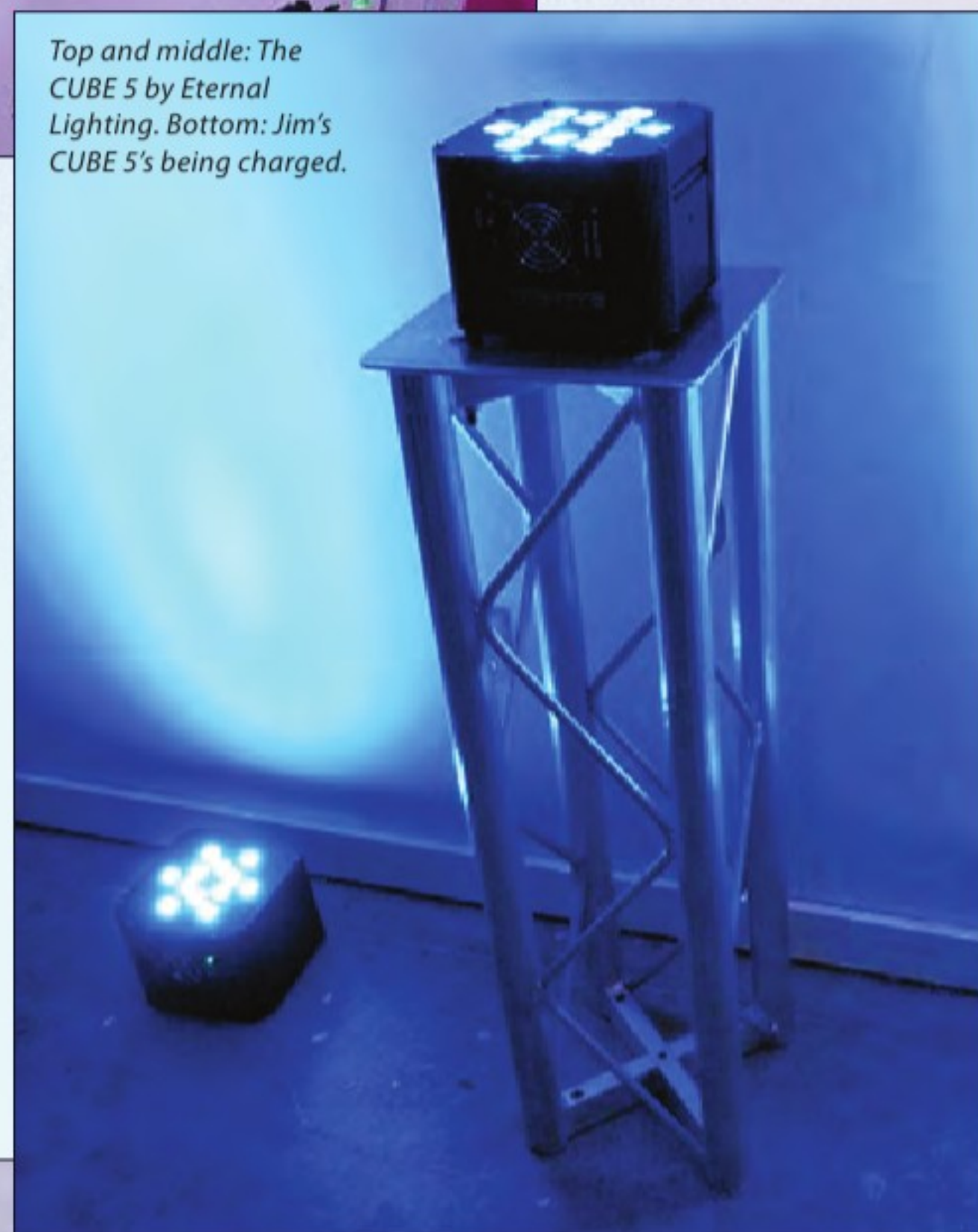
Since you will be charging the lights at your home or office, you will essentially be incurring the cost to run the lights. How much will it cost, exactly? That would depend on how many lights you have and how much you're using them. I've only had my battery powered lights for a few months, so I haven't noticed a difference in my bills yet. I would imagine I won't see a huge difference, but maybe I will notice it in peak wedding months. However, I do write off a portion of my home's utilities for running my business out of my house. So I would of course get to deduct more if my bills increased.

Transporting battery powered lights may take additional space too since they are usually bigger than traditional wired lights. So instead of fitting 6 lights in a container, I can only fit 5. Obviously one less light per container isn't a huge deal, but it is nice to be able to fit as many lights as possible in a container. In addition, battery powered lights typically weigh more than wired lights, since they include the weight of their onboard batteries. My wireless lights weigh about a half a pound heavier than my wired lights. That isn't a lot, but it adds up to several more pounds per container of lights.

As technology continues to advance, I think we'll see wireless lights get smaller and become even more economical. Sure, traditional wired lights will remain the least expensive option for the foreseeable future. But if spending slightly more means gaining the flexibility and convenience that wireless technology offers, doesn't it seem like a good move? If your ROI on doing uplighting is high enough, it very well might be worth it. **ME**



Top and middle: The CUBE 5 by Eternal Lighting. Bottom: Jim's CUBE 5's being charged.



Jim Weisz has been a DJ since 1999, primarily serving the wedding and school markets. Originally from Chicago, he relocated his thriving DJ business to Dallas in 2003. He used his company's web presence to effectively to re-establish his client base within a just a few months. Jim is a seminar speaker and also writes for MobileBeat.com on web issues. He can be reached at jim@discoverydjs.com.

1st Course Salad, 2nd Course Wow!

SERVE UP SOME TASTY TUNES AND LEAVE A POSITIVE IMPRESSION

By Matt Blank

The level of success of one's performance isn't measured only by how many people were on the dance floor, how smooth the transitions were, or even how efficient the planning was. It is the combination of everything that you do throughout the event.

And just as you shouldn't over-emphasize any one element, there can be things that you may be neglecting—and by doing so, missing opportunities to make a positive impression on your clients.

be creative in the mixes I generate, as well as show off the personalities of my clients. My goal during dinner is to show the guests that they have a talented DJ in the house, and that the event is going to be unlike any event they've ever attended. I achieve this through proper programming, mixing, and my display of excitement while playing each song.

As salad is served I keep the music more upbeat (110 BPM and above). The idea is to greet the guests warmly with music that excites them and helps generate the party atmosphere they are expecting.

Have you ever noticed the level of

are, who will need some coaxing, and who's counting the minutes until dinner is over so that they can leave.

Once I decide on the genre of music I am going to play, I then focus in on the melody and lyrics of songs that will match. One of my favorite mixes to play is "Then He Kissed Me" by the Crystals, into "Ain't That a Kick in the Head" by Dean Martin. At the end of the first song, The Crystals sing the chorus three times. When the beats are matching I begin to mix in the next song, while bringing the volume in right at the lyric, "I kissed her and she kissed me." The adrenaline is unlike that of normal mixing for people dancing.

Although it's exciting, instead of looking for the entire crowd to turn with awe, I look for five people to do so. These are the people who comprehend how I performed the mix on multiple levels. The communication from me, the DJ, to the guests, through the music, is what sets the tone for the evening and plants a strong memory of a great DJ in their minds.

This process of mixing during dinner and impressing the guests with your programming is key to setting you apart from your competition. It'll produce more interested potential clients at your events, as well as make the events more fun for you. Remember, most guests wouldn't be able to tell you about their friend's DJ, because he/she was just ok. In order for the guests to remember you (which potentially equates to booking you) you have to give them something to remember.

Were you the DJ who played the wrong first dance song? Were you the DJ that was just ok? Or were you the greatest DJ they've ever experienced at an event and the topic of brunch the next day? **ME**



For example, since it seems that people aren't paying much attention during dinner, this is when most DJs play "background" music, while they prep for the dancing portion of the event. I'm here to explain why doing so can be the biggest mistake a DJ can make.

As far as listening to the music is concerned, I submit that the guest's attention is no greater than during dinner where their focus is on conversation and enjoying the food. They are being "entertained" mainly by listening to the songs that you play. So, it's actually a chance to show the guests your talent and pique their interest—in essence, to "prime" them for dancing later.

Dinner is one of my favorite portions to spin at an event. This is where I get to

anxiety some guests have as they enter the room to find their seats? Why not make the guest's first impression of you the best it can possibly be, by making them comfortable with some fun music. The upbeat music starts building energy for the rest of the evening. People generally tend to focus more on conversation than the meal at this point so the music fits perfectly. Some songs I tend to play are, "Gonna Have a Funky Good Time" by James Brown, "Give it Up" by Marvin Gaye, and "Roadhouse Blues" by The Doors. Pending the crowd's reaction to each song I may go more toward rock or more toward funk, more new school or to old school.

This can also be an indication of the type of crowd you have: who the partiers

Matt Blank started his entertainment career during high school as a dancer for a DJ company, then went on to cultivate his natural talent for mixing music and emceeing while at Millersville University. Matt has been published in Philadelphia Brides Magazine and was a speaker the 2012 Mobile Beat DJ Show in Las Vegas.

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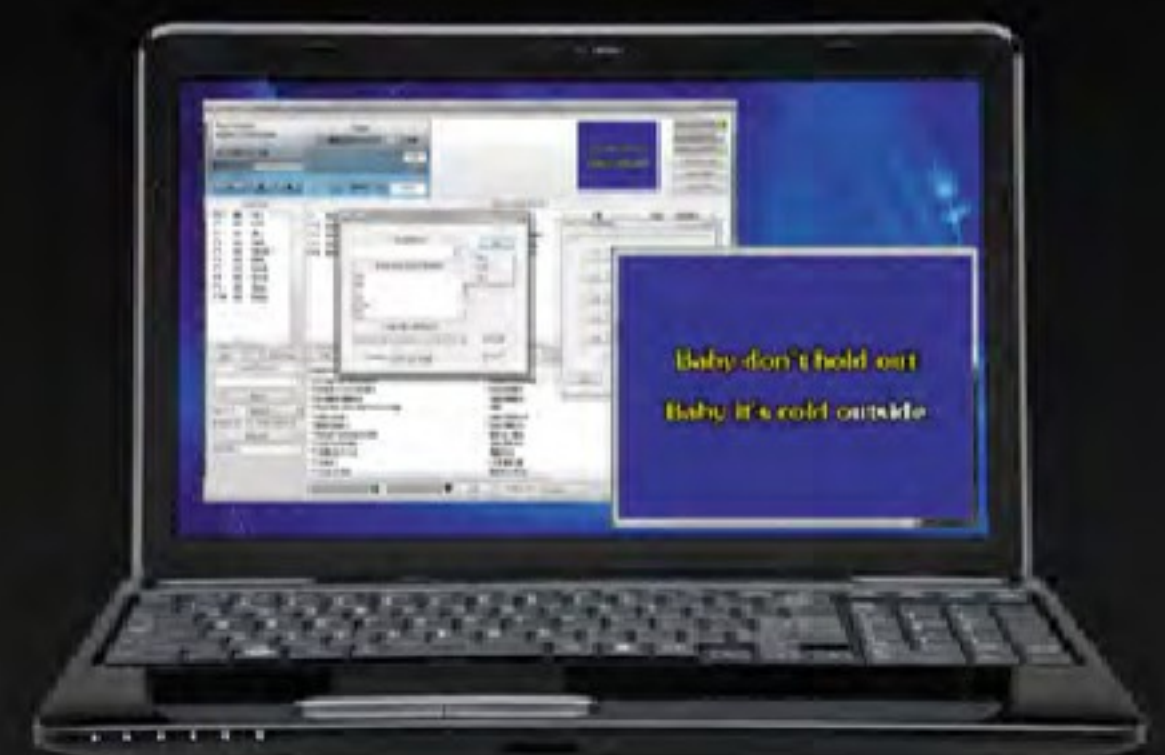
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The Season of Love

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF CLIENTS

By Jay Maxwell

For many years I have harbored a secret desire to be selected as one of the families to have the honor of participating in lighting the Advent candle at Christmas at our church. The church where we have been members for nearly thirteen years is a fairly large church and only four families are selected each year to light one of the candles on the four Sundays before Christmas, so the odds of being asked to light one of the candles is rather remote. This past Christmas season, we were finally given the opportunity to light the candle on the Sunday just prior to Christmas. This particular candle was the one representing love.

Like so many things in life, this was an event that I had seen performed many times, but when it came time to actually do it, I had to ask the procedure. It was simple. We walked up as a family and I introduced my wife, Donna and our two children, Rebecca and Robert. I also made a brief mention that Robert, our youngest, had just turned twelve two days before. Then our children read some well known scriptures about love. The first Bible reading contained the popular verses often heard at weddings from 1 Corinthians, chapter 13 and the other was the oft cited Christian verse of love, John 3:16. Donna then lit the fourth candle (the other three were already burning), leaving the center white candle, representing Jesus Christ, the only candle yet to be brought to light. Then it was my turn to close with a short prayer. In that prayer, I mentioned that many people think of Valentine's Day as the season of love, but we should remember that the true season of love is Christmas.

UNLIMITED LOVE

Later that day, I gave much thought to the words of my prayer and how misguided it is to think that love has a season. Many things do have a season. We often talk about and dread some of them, like flu season or hurricane season. Other seasons are greatly anticipated like football season or a particular hunting season where it is legal to hunt wild game like deer or quail. There is little reason to fear a hurricane in January and football game tailgate parties are not on the weekend agenda in May because it is not the right season. But is there really a season of love? Though there may be days or seasons like Valentine's Day or Christmas where love is a central theme, love should not be

confined to a season.

Love is our greatest gift. How sad it would be if love were confined to just one season. Love should be a daily experience, practiced as often as possible throughout the day. Love goes far beyond just a romantic emotion like the one my wife and I continue to have after nearly twenty two years of a wonderful marriage. It is also expressed in the ways that we find to help people in their daily lives. It may be as simple as holding a door open for someone or greeting a stranger on the street with a warm smile.

As mobile DJs entertaining at weddings, we can express our love to our clients in many ways, including offering ideas that will enhance the experience at the reception. Many people view our job as just playing music at an event, but the seasoned professional has learned that brides especially love the extra care given by vendors who offer ideas she might not have thought of previously.

INNOVATIVE IDEAS

One of the factors that many brides and grooms have not considered prior to our consultation with them is the style of music to play as guests are arriving at the reception venue. They may already have all the special dances chosen and an entire playlist for the dance portion of the evening, but have given little or no thought to what the guests will be listening to prior to their arrival. The most common categories of music for background music after the first guest arrives are lively jazz, the American Song Book, or upbeat Top 40 music. If they want only instrumental music, lively jazz is the best route, but often the best choice is to combine lively jazz with artists singing American Song Book selections, like Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett and Michael Buble. For the Top 40 music (see this issue's list), the primary criteria used is to make sure that the songs are toe-tappers and have a positive (think love) message.

Another idea that we suggest revolves around the bride-father and groom-mother dances. We have had many couples who are hesitant to dance an entire song alone with their dad or mom so they ask us to shorten the song. An alternate to that approach is to suggest that we invite all fathers present to join their daughters on the dance floor about halfway through the bride-father dance. This takes the spotlight off of just the bride and her father. Many brides have appreciated this idea and adopted it as part of their evening. We offer the same suggestion for the groom-mother dance.

Some suggestions that we offer, which our clients love, have nothing to do with music at all. Take the cake cutting, for example. We ask at our planning meeting if there is anything special about the cake that they would like announced. Often there is nothing special to share, but at times there are memorable items to talk about. At one wedding the cake was cut with a sword that was given to the bride's great-great-great grandfather by General Lee after the Civil War. Last year, I had the privilege of telling the story that the cake topper had adorned every cake on the bride's side of the family since 1894. Sometimes the tale to tell is not about the serving utensils or the cake topper, but to give special honor to a



Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, *Play Something We Can Dance To*.

dear friend who loves the couple so much that she took the time to bake and decorate their wedding cake as her gift to the couple.

Some couples are torn about the decision of whether or not to invite all single women and men to participate in the bouquet and garter toss or to limit it to those above a certain age. We actually have a blank on our planning sheet for the age, if they want to limit the age to those old enough to get married. The unique suggestion that we offer however, is that they can do a separate toss for the children who are there. Instead of tossing the bouquet and garter they will toss a teddy bear. All children love teddy bears and it's a great way to get the younger guests involved without the awkwardness that can accompany a child catching the bouquet

as a human iPod. Yet, we must first show how much we care about their day by listening to their wishes. Typically the bride has been dreaming about this day for years, perhaps since she was a little girl, and we must listen to the details of her plan in order to make our best effort to fulfill her every wish. One of the primary differences between the professional disc jockey and the groom's buddy who thinks he knows how to DJ lies in the ability to suggest ways to create an unprecedented experience at their event.

Thank goodness there is no season of love. As mobile entertainers, we demonstrate our love for the client as we offer more than just our equipment and music for a couple's wedding. We offer ideas that extend far beyond simply what to play. Of course let's

Wedding Social Hour Top 50

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST
1	YOU ARE THE BEST THING	RAY LAMONTAGNE
2	RHYTHM OF LOVE	PLAIN WHITE T'S
3	BETTER TOGETHER	JACK JOHNSON
4	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	BRUNO MARS
5	I'M YOURS	JASON MRAZ
6	ALL I WANT TO DO	SUGARLAND
7	MARRY ME	TRAIN
8	I'D RATHER BE WITH YOU	JOSHUA RADIN
9	THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT	MAROON 5
10	CRAZY LOVE	MICHAEL BUBLE
11	SMILE	UNCLE KRACKER
12	THE WAY I AM	INGRID MICHAELSON
13	HOME	PHILLIP PHILLIPS
14	WANTED	HUNTER HAYES
15	BETTER WITH YOU	FIVE TIMES AUGUST
16	A THOUSAND YEARS	CHRISTINA PERRI
17	LET'S JUST FALL IN LOVE AGAIN	JASON CASTRO
18	LET MY LOVE OPEN THE DOOR	SONDRE LERCHE
19	SAY HEY (I LOVE YOU)	MICHAEL FRANTI
20	1,2,3,4	FEIST
21	FASTER	MATT NATHANSON
22	MARRY YOU	BRUNO MARS
23	ARE YOU GONNA KISS ME OR NOT	THOMPSON SQUARE
24	LUCKY	JASON MRAZ
25	ALL YOUR LIFE	THE BAND PERRY

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST
26	JANUARY WEDDING	AVETT BROTHERS
27	OWE IT ALL TO YOU	FIVE TIMES AUGUST
28	THESE WORDS	NATASHA BEDINGFIELD
29	STUCK LIKE GLUE	SUGARLAND
30	HEY MAMA	MAT KEARNEY
31	YOU AND I	INGRID MICHAELSON
32	ROMEO AND JULIET	KILLERS
33	THE HEART OF LIFE	JOHN MAYER
34	BRAND NEW DAY	JOSHUA RADIN
35	I DO	COLBIE CAILLAT
36	LOVE	MATT WHITE
37	YOU	CHRIS YOUNG
38	STOLEN	DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL
39	THANK YOU	DIDO
40	SWEET PEA	AMOS LEE
41	SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL	NEEDTOBREATHE
42	TODAY WAS A FAIRY TALE	TAYLOR SWIFT
43	HONEY BEE	BLAKE SHELTON
44	LET'S GROW OLD TOGETHER	LANAE' HALE
45	HAVEN'T MET YOU YET	MICHAEL BUBLE
46	JUST SAY YES	SNOW PATROL
47	LOVE AND SOME VERSES	IRON & WINE
48	KEEP ON LOVIN' YOU	STEEL MAGNOLIA
49	FALLING IN	LIFEHOUSE
50	LOVING YOU	PAOLO NUTINI

or garter. After all, the tradition states that the person who catches the item will be the next to be married and no parent wants their ten year old to catch the bouquet or garter.

BEING A GOOD LISTENER

There is a fine line that we must tread when consulting with a wedding couple. On the one hand we want to offer suggestions to enhance the event. This shows that we truly care about their special day and that we are offering much more than just acting

not forget that knowing what to play and the right time to play it is ultimately why we are hired for the night. For a truly memorable event, one where not only the bride and groom, but every guest there leaves saying, "Wow, I just had the time of my life," you must know the right music to play from the moment the first guest walks into the room until the last song of the night. And sometime during the night you may also have the opportunity to share more love, by taking and playing a guest's request after they walk up to you and say, "Hey DJ...play something we can dance to!" **MB**

Trouble in Paradise

THE WORST WEDDING VENUE STAFF EVER?

By Mike “Dr. Frankenstand” Ryan

It's safe to say that farming is, at best, a tough field to plow. It's not surprising that some innovative ranchers have jumped on the wedding hay ride bank wagon by converting some of their acreage into outdoor wedding facilities. Recently I performed at one of these “farm venues,” where residents think tractors are sexy. I even got to spin some country music, a nice change from hip-hop.

At first glance, the site was like a fairy-tale secret garden, with beautifully maintained grass everywhere, and dozens of California pepper trees providing a canopy of refreshing shade

the first to pursue the wedding market in the area and, as such, I expected the management to have their act together. Wrong.

The first brush with disaster came in the form of tiny pepper tree flowers—they were everywhere! They were on the dinner plates, in the glasses of water, on the silverware, literally, everywhere. The wait staff, made up mostly of inexperienced high school students, went around to each table and with paper fans in a futile attempt to remove them.

With every wedding I expect two things: they never start on time and something (hopefully small) will go wrong; it's just the nature of weddings. The first thing to go sour was a long delay in the food service—nearly an hour. I've experienced 15-minute delays but never an hour. They knew the guest count up front so I was surprised at the slow service.

Here's the real bone I had to pick with this facility: At one point I stuck my head into the so-called kitchen (actually a shed-like structure) to check on the meal and was shocked to see three dogs roaming around while the cook prepared the food. This made my hair bristle and really grossed me out, not to mention that it was a flagrant violation of health codes. Without even thinking I protested out loud: “You can't have dogs in here!” at which the female “chef” flipped me the finger! The food finally arrived to the buffet line only to have the main course quickly run out, leaving twenty some guests waiting. This happened several time. So far, so bad!

But it got worse...With the food delay, the reception activities got pushed back. We decided to eliminate the anniversary dance which was acceptable although disappointing to the bride and groom. But when it came to the toasts, the newlyweds' anger bubbled over. The staff failed to have enough champagne glasses for everyone. The food “captain” wanted to blow off the traditional elixir but after my protest she offered to use plastic glasses. Real classy...not!

The rest of the evening proceeded fairly smoothly and when the evening had run its course I started to pack up. It was then that one of the ranch dogs came up to me with its tail wagging. Now I love dogs (we have four) and I started to pet this old Yeller when I got a whiff of his rancid fur. He smelled awful, like he hadn't had a bath in years. It was then that I realized this was one of the dogs that I saw in the kitchen! I wanted to VOMIT.

This event was a study in how to take a beautiful wedding setting and ruin the experience with poor planning and execution. Plus, the only “hair of the dog” anyone should have to deal with in connection with a wedding reception should be for the next day's hangover! **MB**



in a county that regularly bakes in 100-degree-plus summers. White twinkle lights hung gracefully in the trees, giving the area a magical Disneyland Main Street feel.

I was told to set up my equipment on a covered cement slab that doubles as the dance floor. I was pleased to discover a convenient dual electrical outlet with each plug connected to its own individual circuit. There were also large double wooden doors that opened up to a back area where I could park my van for easy access. So far so good.

My understanding was that this converted ranch was one of



Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a SoCal DJ on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands. He is currently the president of the San Diego Chapter of the ADJA.

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“Here's a List of a Few Songs We'd Like to Hear...”

HAVE CLIENT PLAY LISTS GOTTEN OUT OF HAND?

By Michael Edwards

I was wondering to myself the other day: At what point in time did our clients take over control of our music choices? Over the past 30 years, our customers have always given us general musical guidelines and a few special requests, but within the few years, the lists we tend to get in advance are often several pages long...

even after we've politely explained before they hired us that we need flexibility to read the crowd, honor their viable requests and use our own judgement. They nod, smile, agree, sign the contract and then still send a six-page list of “must plays.”

Some of you are probably in denial right now; especially if you thought to yourself, “I don't let my clients tell me what to play!” News flash: In today's world of online reviews and social media's viral reach, many potential clients will pass you by and look for a different DJ as soon as they read a review about you that says, “We sent in a long list of songs, but the DJ didn't play most of the music we asked for.” The review won't mention that because you didn't play all of their non-danceable, semi-recognizable personal favorites, you managed to pack the dance floor all night by reading the crowd and playing the music needed to make their event a huge success. No, they only remember that you didn't play their long list of lame requests. Clearly, clients like this are mainly interested in “control.” With more and more clients demonstrating this mindset every year, one might think mobile DJs are destined to become little more than pre-formatted human jukeboxes.

It wasn't always like this. How

did this change happen, and why? One possibility is an insidious side effect of the already damaging “iPod DJ” problem and the rise of “me too” DJs fueled by huge, illegal MP3 libraries. When our future clients attend an event ruined by one of these characters, they start to think, “Uh oh, we'd never hire this guy...we really need to tell our next DJ what we want to hear, so our party doesn't tank like this one.” Thus, I believe, the amateurs have



undermined the public's faith in a DJ's ability to make the party happen without their help.

But why do pro DJs allow this? Perhaps playing from a long playlist from the client is seen by some DJs as a way of serving their clients wishes. I'd argue that the client also wants a great party where everyone stays until the end. Which would you prefer I do? Playing from a client's

long playlist seemingly relieves that DJ of responsibility for the success or failure of the event. Complacent DJs have decided that it's much easier to play what the paying client asks for and then simply let the chips fall where they may. You still got paid, right?

If that's your attitude, respectfully, you should probably think about changing professions. It's a crying shame to know that you could have pumped the crowd and turned a mediocre function completely around, but instead, you dutifully followed the clueless client's instructions to the letter, and watched as nobody danced and everyone left early. (And by the way, they all left your business cards behind too.) No DJ can survive by letting the client be the DJ, any more than a master chef will allow a paying restaurant patron to dictate the ingredients in menu dishes that are being served to everyone else in the restaurant.

We need to stand up as an industry and make some basic “request” rules that every real pro DJ follows. I am seriously thinking about handing each client a simple genre checklist (Top 40, Dance, Urban/Hip Hop, 90s, 80s, Rock, Disco/70s, Funk, etc.) so that they can let us know their favorite music styles—by category only. We'll choose the songs from each category they've selected and we'll also choose when to play them. We'll let the clients add up to six “must plays” and up to three “don't plays,” then leave the rest to the professionals. If that doesn't work for the client, they can certainly find an abundance of out-of-work, human iPod “yes men” with sound systems and a lower price, who'll be happy to play four hours of Megadeth or John Denver. They'll both get exactly what they deserve! **ME**

Michael Edwards is the owner of AllStar Entertainment & UpLighting, located in Andover, MA. A member of the ADJA and the Mobile Beat Advisory Board, he can be contacted at 978-470-4700 or emailed at info@getadj.com. His company websites include www.GetaDJ.com and www.GetUplights.com.



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Wisdom of The Dead

SURPRISING MASTERS OF BRANDING

By Mike Ficher

Regardless of age, regardless of position, regardless of the business we happen to be in, all of us need to understand the importance of branding. We are CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called You.” - Tom Peters

The Beatles. The Rolling Stones. The Who. ZZ Top. AC/DC. Nirvana. U2. The Doors. The Ramones. Van Halen. The Grateful Dead. Arguably, some of the greatest rock bands of all-time.

But all of these and many more eclipsed the sum of their often prolific and frequently distinct music catalogs to craft something even more powerful: Each one became a brand.

From the fonts and designs of their names, to their singular logos, to their styles of attire, to their stage personas, each evokes indelible images and, more critically, rich memories and powerful emotions.

Even groups like the Doors and the Beatles, who have not produced music for more than four decades, still elicit formidable reactions with brands that still resonate, even with younger audiences.

From your marketing materials to the name of your company to the, eminently vital, unique aspects and thoughtful execution of your performances, what is your brand?

PROMISED LAND

The American Marketing Association defines as “brand” as a “Name, term, design,

symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.” Ironically, from a modern context, branding began as a way to identify one rancher’s cattle from another via a hot iron stamp.

Certainly, like the ubiquitous rancher seeking to track his livestock, the rock bands offered above carved out remarkable brands, distinct and memorable from the thousands of rock bands operating at any given moment.

MARKETIN’

Think of the Grateful Dead—extended jams fusing elements of rock, folk, bluegrass, blues, reggae, country, improvisational jazz, psychedelia, and space rock; live performances featuring frequent long musical improvisations; iconic figures such as Bob Weir, Mickey Hart and Jerry Garcia; and, a distinctive image and brand developed over decades that appears even stronger today than ever, despite the band’s official dissolution in 1995.

How did the Dead achieve that?

Well, for one, The Grateful Dead broke almost every accepted rule in the music industry. The group encouraged their fans to record shows and swap the recordings, which greatly increased their fan base and exposure; they built a mailing list and sold concert tickets directly to fans long before the Internet facilitated such transactions more readily; and they built their business model based on live concerts, instead of album or singles sales.

By cultivating a dedicated, active community, collaborating with their audience to co-create the Deadhead lifestyle, and giving away “freemium”



A business analyst by day, Mike Ficher is an actor, voice artist, MC, sportscaster, public address announcer and former mobile entertainer. He is also the host of the weekly syndicated radio program, The Ultimate Oldies Show. Mike synthesizes these varied experiences to illuminate historic connectivity and fresh perspectives on the mobile entertainment profession. More info at mikeficher.com.

content, the Dead, intentionally or via trial-and-error, pioneered many social media and inbound marketing concepts successfully used by businesses across all industries today.

CASEY JONES

In addition, The Dead toured constantly, playing more than 2,300 concerts in their three decades together. Their improvisational live shows differentiated the Grateful Dead from almost all other touring bands. While most rock and roll bands rehearse a standard show for their tours, replicated nightly, with little variation, in city after city, the Grateful Dead eschewed such practice. Garcia stated in a 1966 interview, "We don't make up our sets beforehand. We'd rather work off the tops of our heads than off a piece of paper." Each Dead concert was a unique experience.

That approach helped promote a sense of community among their fans, who became known as Deadheads, many of whom followed their tours for months or years on end.

GOTTA SERVE SOMEBODY

In their formative years, the band offered their time and talents to their community, the renowned Haight-Ashbury neighborhood of San Francisco, making available free food, lodging, music and health care to all comers; they were the "first among equals in giving unselfishly of themselves to hippie culture, performing 'more free concerts than any band in the history of music,'" according to Lilian Roxon's

Rock Encyclopedia.

Observed David Meerman Scott and Brian Halligan, authors of *Marketing Lessons From the Grateful Dead*, "The Grateful Dead's branding, which was constantly changing and evolving, was in direct contrast to what other bands did. When bands like the Rolling Stones went on tour, they usually had a theme that coincided with the album they were promoting at the time. Branding was tightly controlled and carried through to all elements of their marketing: posters, T-shirts, stage sets, etc."

One of the key figures in that branding, Hal Kant served as principal lawyer and general counsel for the Grateful Dead for 35 years, helping generate the band millions of dollars in revenue through his management of the group's intellectual property and merchandising rights. At Kant's recommendation, the group was one of the few rock'n roll pioneers to retain ownership of their music masters and publishing rights.

TOUCH OF GREY

What can mobile entertainers learn from one of the most idiosyncratic rock bands in history? Be yourself, be creative, work tirelessly, make each event memorable and unique, surround yourself with talented, qualified and sharp people, develop a distinct and singular brand, balance the classic with contemporary, manage your image, improvise, serve your fans well, give to your community, smile and have fun. Hey, you can be a rock star, too! **MB**

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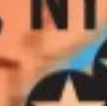
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Start the Year Off Right

A WAKE UP CALL AND A WEALTH OF NETWORKING IDEAS

By Arnaldo Offermann

I hate writing articles with less how-to and more of “things to think about.” However, this is something that has to be said.

What the heck happened to our industry? Yes, we know that DJs will bicker back and forth about anything and everything, but how do others perceive us? Well, here’s one disturbing example...

FIRST, THE BAD NEWS

There’s a Facebook group called “Dodgy Technicians.” Simply put, this is a group where stagehands, rigging techs, and other production crew members make fun of some of the horrible things that pass as “professional work.” This group always makes fun of DJs because DJs have given them a hard time. Stories about DJs “running in the red” are all too common.

However, it was a recent post that stirred some thought. Someone asked “With the constant bickering from the children in the back seat—who has the biggest ego?” Keep in mind this group has few DJs to begin with, so the bickering of this group is among like-minded individuals. Lighting techs got 5 votes, sound techs got 12, and DJs? They got 102 votes. (Yes, I was one of those 102 votes.)

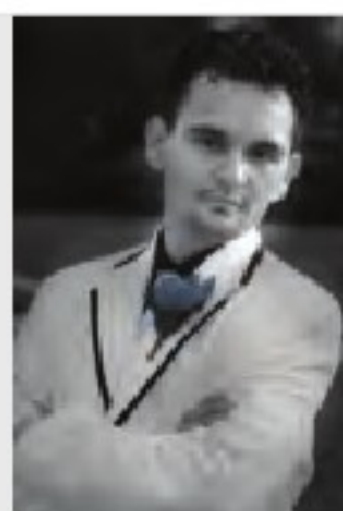
Every industry forum has bickering, senseless fights, and just plan stupid conversations. However, this poll got me wondering: Is the DJ industry the ugly step child of EVERY event category? I asked several wedding vendors about their thoughts as DJs as an industry and answers ranged from “not organized” to questions about when we became an “industry” to begin with! OUCH.

BURNING BRIGHTER

With 2013 just starting, now’s the time to step up and make some positive changes. Let’s change the perception and really get the ball rolling! How do we fix the DJ industry’s overall image and lose the negative connotations? The answer is magical and oh so obvious:

You can’t and you won’t.

Arnaldo Offermann specializes in youth events, and is the driving force behind 4 Schools Only, a hugely successful division of A Premier Entertainment, in Central Florida (Tampa, Orlando). Find out more at www.4schoolsonly.com, www.apremierentertainment.com and www.arnaldooffermand.com. He shares many of his school success secrets at www.masterschooldances.com.



Did that sting a little? Whether it did or didn’t, I’ve found that there are too many people who just don’t care, and they outnumber those of us who do. This is going to sound a bit... wrong...but I stopped caring and instead embraced it. I think you should, too. You see, it’s a tricky way to use the state of our industry to an advantage, but it is doable.

Think about it; if you’re the brightest star in a galaxy, you will stand out for many light-years, but if more stars begin shining just as brightly, you’re no longer as easy to spot. Basically, what I’m saying is that if you work hard on YOUR business, you will EASILY excel past the buffoons who embarrass our industry.

However, unlike a star, you are not a giant mass of gas. Well, you may be, but not in the sense of which I describe. A star can function alone, but your business will only grow so much by itself. Plus, it’s unfair to hope the industry stays at the bottom so you can stand out more.

And think about this; a bright group of stars will stand out even more. How well do you know your competition? I may not know each DJ in our area personally, but I know who’s good and who’s not. I also know who’s a good person at heart. These are the DJs we proudly associate ourselves with. We bounce ideas off each other, refer leads, and just keep a daily banter up with each other. We also laugh at those who do bring the industry down. They are not our competition, they are just referred to as “the rest.” Even if you never cross paths

with your comrades in arms, it’s good to know you’re not alone in your area.

MY FELLOW PROFESSIONALS...

The people who’s opinions truly matter are other wedding vendors. After all, if they have a poor opinion of wedding DJs, they won’t help deter clients when they talk about looking for cheap entertainment. This means that making vendors feel like their life, and their client’s wedding, will be a lot easier if they worked with you.

That being said, are you networking? Are you attending as many networking meetings as you can? If so, are you talking with the organizers so YOU can help provide the music? If you get the opportunity, bring a couple staff members or someone who can help co-represent you while you handle the music. Your equipment needs to look its best, as do you. First impressions count and if you hold a consistent persona during these networking meetings that appeal to vendors who reach your target market, you are more likely to get referrals.

Ask them what you could do to help change their negative perceptions about DJs.

Take this time to ask them questions about their perception of the DJs in the area. Get them to open up with some honest and brutal feedback and in a sly manner, talk about things you are doing differently. While the answers may be obvious, ask them what you could do to help change their negative perceptions about DJs.

However, do some homework ahead of time and beat them to the punch. For example, I guarantee you most photographers will talk about how they hate DJs with laser dots all over the bride and groom. Thus, when a photographer and I talk business and they show me their work, I pull out my iPad and show them some of our lighting setups. Then I bring up on how we DON'T aim laser dots anywhere near the bride and groom. This is a great way to get people to see that you're different from the rest, right off the bat. If one of your DJ friends is well known in a circle, ask him/her to introduce you in, and you do the same with your circle of vendor friends.

I don't need to tell you that you should be your best when you're performing, but how well do you do in your interactions with other vendors, before and after? Do you call beforehand to introduce yourself and go over the timeline? Do you call/email afterwards and thank them for a job well done and extend a

"hope we can work together again soon" message? These little common sense things aren't done by many vendors, so the extra touch always gets attention!

Of course, when it comes to networking you will not start getting referrals after the first meeting; but those one-on-one connections, a friendly attitude, and a stellar work ethic can get referrals after only one event done together.

Make sure to visit every venue in your area, and I mean EVERY venue and re-introduce yourself, or if you already have a rapport, stop by and say hi. Discuss how you love working together and want to know if there's anything you can do to help them out. The same goes for bridal and tux shops. Perhaps they have a big sale coming up where some uplighting would look great? A small gift of a free uplighting setup can go a long way in terms of referrals. Don't forget to call up coordinators and follow the same networking steps outlined above!

With the new year in play, I think it's time you get a better focus on YOU. Don't worry about changing the industry because it's not going to happen anytime soon. Take that energy and spend it on making sure that people know that you're in a league all of your own! **MB**

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“Wow” Doesn’t Happen By Accident

PREPARATION: THE ONLY WAY TO AMAZE

By Stu Chisholm

Everyone is looking for that one big thing they can do to really set themselves apart. I remember my first “wow factor” moment. At a wedding, my cocktail hour music was playing as the bride’s mother came up to me and said, with excited expectation in her voice, “The bride and groom are going to cut the cake now!” I just blinked at her. Back then, a DJ might announce the cutting of the cake, but more often than not, we ignored it, because the photographers didn’t want too many people around interfering with their all-important photo. So I announced the cake cutting, and as I watched the whole thing play out, I kept thinking, “There’s got to be something more I can do with this.” The answer would come at work.

SONIC WORKPLACE LARCENY

At that time, “work” was in radio at a small AM daytimer that I was helping to get refurbished and back on the air. While going over the music and production libraries, I found a huge stash of sound effects discs, and the light bulb came on! I “borrowed” two sounds: a chainsaw and a

hacksaw. At the next wedding, with permission and a tiny bit of rehearsal with the couple, we made the cake cutting a centerpiece moment, the audience counting down the first slice as the sound of the chainsaw buzzed and the crowd burst into laughter. The “Michigan Wedding Cake Massacre” was born! After putting it on my demo tape, it became the most requested item on my menu of activities in the mid-’80s.

Other ideas spun off from this: a more elegant version for the “white glove” crowd, sound effects for the toasts, samples and drop-ins for the dance portions and so on. That one small idea became the genesis of a huge variety of bits that I include in my shows to this day, chainsaws aside.

THE KEY INGREDIENT OF WOW

Whatever ideas you’ve come up with to set yourself apart and generate WOW, there is one thing that I have found indispensable. In fact, it’s so vital, it’s more important than any other aspect of my performance! That one thing is this: preparation.

As Todd Mitchem said at a Mobile Beat show years ago, the best “spontaneous” moments are carefully planned well in advance. This idea isn’t a shock for most of us, as we assemble timelines and/or agendas for our weddings. I’m talking about taking this up a notch, making detailed plans for specific activities. For any bit you do to have the maximum impact, from “Love Story” presentations to a new spin on the bouquet and garter tosses, you should be scripting it out and rehearsing it. Yes, out loud! This will add “polish” to your show. It helps you feel more confident, which your audience picks up on, and helps your show “flow.”



Even if your audience doesn’t understand it, every hour of preparation shows in your finished product.



*Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ in the Detroit area since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ, done some radio, some commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven. Stu’s guide to the profession, **The Complete DJ**, is available from ProDJ Publishing.*

Rehearsal is the difference between a pretty good show and WOW! It is also an ongoing process. Not only do we need to prepare and rehearse the specific shows we do, but we need to keep our skills up to par. That means placing a focus on ourselves; how we speak and present ourselves to the world.

EXPERT PREP TECHNIQUES

As a student at the Specs Howard School of Broadcasting (now "Media Arts"), I got in the habit of recording myself. Even when I'm not doing a show, I'll record myself reading my script for the weekend, or reading a newspaper or magazine article. I imagine my neighbors thinking I'm a bit strange as they can hear me reading, with near theatrical inflection, in the...shall we say "reading room?" I've also stuck my good ol' FlipCam in the corner at gigs, simply to see myself as others do. I have never regretted this! It has alerted me to many glitches in my speech, which can change, develop and, with a bit of work, disappear over time. Again, it's an ongoing process.

Also, try to avoid actually reading FROM your script at a show! I admit that I print up a "cheat sheet" in the form of a small card I can palm, containing vital information, such as the couple's name (yes, I've blanked on that one before), the facility's name, the name of the best man and so on. But try to memorize your scripts for every bit you do.

It might seem daunting until you consider that each bit is a self-contained "module" that you may well use over and over. With only small variations, you'll do your bouquet and garter routine at almost every wedding, so once you've got it down, all you need to remember are the variables. This also goes for the introductions, toasts and so on. We also have the luxury of having a "safety net," unlike, say, a Hollywood actor, in that we can have our scripts handy for review in-between each activity.

THIS IS HOW WE DO IT

There are TV shows that my wife, a television producer, calls "process shows." In them, they show something happening

from start to finish, such as creating a new kind of military rifle on "Sons of Guns," or showing how a locomotive is made on "How It's Made." What I'm talking about here is also a process. It might sound a bit dry and even boring, but it is the foundation of WOW!

Nobody thinks about the hours of sitting in ground school learning all kinds of data; the rough-and-tumble of actual physical training; or the prep and loading of gear...when they watch a skydiving team at an air show. They just see the sum total of all of that and can't help but say, "WOW!" And that, my friends, is THE secret to WOW factor: even if your audience doesn't understand it, every hour of preparation shows in your finished product. In the online forums, DJs constantly talk about "giving our clients our best," or "giving 110%." Solid preparation and rehearsal is how this is accomplished. There are no shortcuts.

Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**

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R-E-S-P-E-C-T

DO YOU SHOW EVERYONE REAL RESPECT?

By Paul Kida, The DJ Coach

The disc jockey profession is one that requires much of us. This is due to one simple fact: We are constantly in the public eye. We deal with people, not only on an individual basis, but also in an exposed environment at our events. Because we operate in such a “fish bowl” it is imperative that we are always on our best behavior.

There are many different qualities that we should display throughout an entire event, from load-in to load-out; but one of the most important things we should demonstrate at all times is respect.

Showing proper respect entails treating others with consideration, holding them in high regard, giving due honor and esteem, as well as showing common courtesy to those that we deal with, both in business and during our performances.

CLIENTS

The first people that we deal with directly are our clients. After you have booked someone’s event, do you show them the proper respect? Specifically, you might ask yourself: Am I as prompt in returning phone calls and emails after I book the event as I was while I was in the process of booking? Do I respond just as quickly and politely when I have a client who is very demanding or one who seems to be asking a lot advice on trivial matters way in advance of the date? These may seem like insignificant details, but the answers to these questions tell us if we are truly being respectful or not.

We have all dealt with so-called “Bridezillas” and other clients who are a difficult to work with, at one time or another. Obviously it is more difficult to show the proper respect to this kind of client. You may not agree with certain decisions that are being made at all. However, remember that it is the client’s event, NOT yours. In dealing with such clients, be tactful in offering your professional opinion and let them know how you have seen certain situations work, as well as some that did not work...but never let yourself get pushy or arrogant! Never let yourself project that “I know better” attitude, no matter how crazy the request may seem to be. By holding the client’s ideas in proper esteem, you will keep them happy, as well



as show respect. You may even get them to change their mind about something that you know will not work well by keeping this attitude.

VENDORS

How about our dealings with other vendors that we work with? Do we show them respect by holding their part of the event in high regard? Each and every vendor that we work with views their part in any particular event as being highly significant to the success of the evening. When it comes to what “makes” the event, the caterers think it is the food, the decorator thinks it is the atmosphere, the florist thinks it is the beautiful flower arrangements, and so on. It is easy for us all to minimize the importance of the other vendors. It’s also easy for us to develop the attitude that we are the most important component of any party and just dismiss the contribution of the other vendors. After all, it definitely is the DJ, the music and the packed dance floor that is the most important, right?

While it is true that our performance is vital to the success of any event, the absolute truth is that it takes the combined effort of each type of vendor to make a complete success of the event. The client has chosen each vendor because they have a certain idea of how they want the event to look, taste, flow, etc., so it takes all of us to make this vision



Paul Kida, The DJ Coach, is a founding member of the Colorado Disc Jockey Association. He owns JAMMCATTS DJ Entertainment (www.jammcattsdj.com), and is a regular speaker at Mobile Beat DJ Shows.

come true. Therefore, you would never want it to get back to your client that you were condescending, rude or uncooperative with any other vendor at any function. This kind of attitude is not showing respect at all for others. It doesn't really matter if the other vendors show us this kind of respect or not, we will feel better about ourselves if we do this, and other people working there will notice it also.

OTHER ENTERTAINERS

How about our fellow DJs? Do we demonstrate respect and courtesy to our bothers/sisters in music? You may ask, "Why in the world should I show them respect when they are competing with me for business?" Well, there is one very important reason. Many people still view the disc jockey business as a fragmented commodity rather than a group of solid businessmen and businesswomen. We can do a lot to help correct this notion by giving due respect to our fellow DJs. Never bad mouth or degrade another DJ. We all know that there are fine, upstanding disc jockeys, as well as those whose ethics and performances leave something to be desired. However, instead of dishonoring and belittling those who we know to be inferior as performers, simply say nothing at all. If asked for your opinion of a certain company, just tactfully say that you have certain standards and/or ways of conducting your business that they may not meet up to. This is much better than just coming out and saying that their company is terrible and does a lousy job!



By respectfully viewing other DJs as assets to the community instead of just looking at them as competitors, we help bridge the gap and build stronger relationships with one another, as well as strengthen our industry. I will give you an example of a situation that happened to me. Years ago, when I moved to Colorado from Connecticut, I settled into a small town, joined the local Chamber of Commerce and started building my company again. I was the only DJ in the chamber and was actually doing quite well. Then another DJ moved into town, got a huge write-up in the local paper, and I was left thinking, "Great! This is all I need! Now I have to deal with competition!" However, I quickly recovered and instead said to myself, "That's stupid thinking. There is plenty of work for us both!" I now consider that DJ one of my closest friends! We have referred jobs back and forth when we were booked up and helped each other out on numerous occasions, both for work and personally. If I hadn't changed my thinking back then, what a friendship I would have missed out on! (Thanks, Ray!)

All in all, showing the proper respect to all people that we deal with will go a long way in creating an image of true professionalism. When clients, fellow vendors, and our DJ comrades sense that we respect them, it will most certainly help us stand out as the true professionals that we are. **MB**

Please send any comments on this article or suggestions for future articles or questions to djcoach@mobilebeat.com.

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25 Years of Hysteria

DEF LEPPARD'S CLASSIC FOLLOW-UP CELEBRATES A QUARTER-CENTURY OF SUGAR

By Rick Ellis

It was the summer of 1987. I was 18 years old, a recent graduate from Merritt Island High School and had just landed a dream job working at Omni Music and Video in the local mall. Up until this point I had mostly listened to pop and a few of the “harder” rock bands like Heart, Night Ranger, Bon Jovi, Cinderella etc. I remember walking into the store for a Tuesday night shift, and the manager, Allison, threw me a CD and told me to put it on the store system. “This just came in today; I really think you’re going to like this,” she said with a smile.

I looked at the disc, shrugged, and put it on, little realizing I was about to be introduced to a band whose music would be a huge part of my life. From the guitar intro on “Women” to the final notes of “Love and Affection” I was hooked. We played the disc—Def Leppard’s *Hysteria*—three times that night. As we were getting ready to close, Allison smiled as she saw me coming over with not only the *Hysteria* cassette but *Pyromania* as well, to purchase with my employee discount. As we walked out to the parking lot I tore off the wrapper, got into my car, put the top down and cranked the volume to 11.

I jumped full-on into everything Leppard and in the spring of 1988, when “Pour Some Sugar On Me” was released on MTV, I was not only wearing the Def Leppard comic t-shirt cut like the one that Joe Elliott wore in the video, but had also shredded a pair of Levi’s trying to duplicate his look—much to the chagrin of my mother, who actually offered me \$20 *not* to wear them out one night when she saw me getting ready to go hang with my friends.

RECORD OF AN ORDEAL

Hysteria was the follow-up to Def Leppard’s wildly successful 1983 album, *Pyromania*. The band started laying down tracks in February 1984, but it would take three long years for the final product to be ready. Producing the album was no easy task, as Robert “Mutt” Lange, who had produced *Pyromania* withdrew from the project during pre-production citing exhaustion. Jim Steinman (a.k.a. Meat Loaf) took over but was quickly removed, and the band tried to produce the album themselves, with less than spectacular results. The initial recordings were thrown out.

Then on December 31, 1984, the unthinkable happened. A car accident in rural England cost the band’s drummer Rick Allen his left arm and nearly his life. Most bands would have cut their losses and moved on to find another drummer, but the band stood by Rick and worked with him as he perfected a combination electronic/acoustic drum kit that allowed him to use foot pedals to duplicate the hits he would normally make with his left arm.

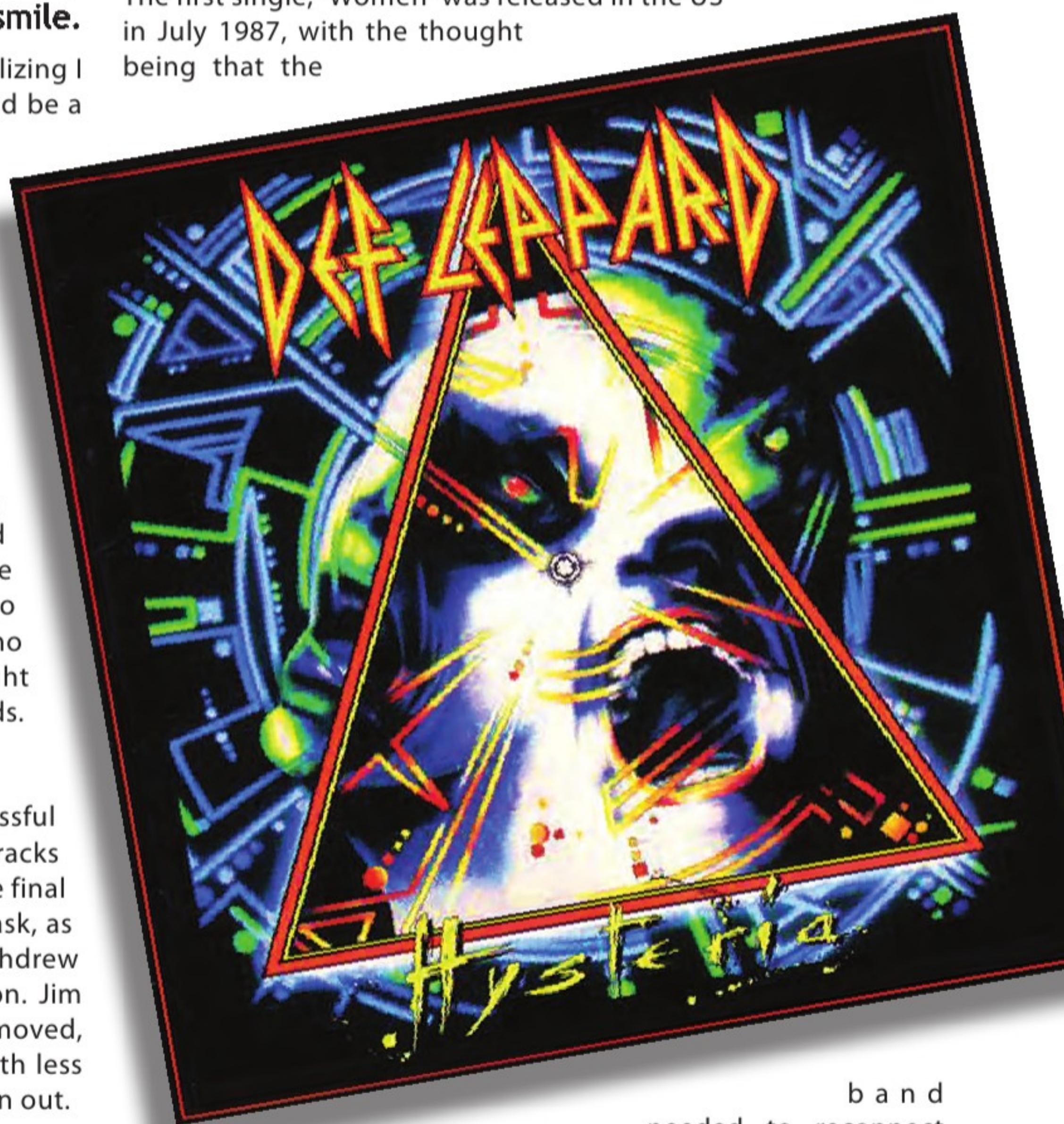
Mutt Lange returned in late 1985 to take over producing duties only to be sidelined by a car accident of his own; and then in 1986 Leppard singer Joe Elliott contracted a case of the

mumps.

Despite all the trials and tribulations, the last track to be recorded, “Armageddon It” was completed in January of 1987. Lange then began the enormous task of mixing the tracks and getting things just right. His vision for *Hysteria* was for it to be hard rock’s answer to Michael Jackson’s *Thriller*, in that all of the tracks would have the potential of becoming hit singles. Finally, on August 3, 1987, *Hysteria* was unleashed to an eager, and in some cases (like my own) unsuspecting public.

FINALLY...BUT

The first single, “Women” was released in the US in July 1987, with the thought being that the



band needed to reconnect with diehard fans with a straight ahead hard rock song, rather than something more suited to Top 40 radio. Sadly, this was not the case, as the song only reached #80 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 and quickly disappeared.

“Animal,” the second single, released in October 1987, became notorious as a song that took the band almost three years to “get right,” according to the sound they were looking for. It established a beachhead in the Top 20 for the boys from Sheffield, making its stand at number 19 and becoming the first of ten consecutive Top 40 singles on the US charts. The video, which was the first of many Dial MTV favorites from the album,

showed the band playing in and around a travelling circus with lead singer Joe Elliot appearing to be the target of the knife thrower. (If you look closely, you can see the knives are landing nowhere near him.)

The album's title track was the third single and the first of two slower songs released. "Hysteria" hit another milestone, reaching the number 10 spot on the *Billboard* Hot 100.

By the spring of 1988, the album was a monster hit, having sold more than three million copies. Even so, it still had not covered its production costs; at the time, *Hysteria* was the most expensive album ever produced.

SUGAR POURS

"Pour Some Sugar On Me" was released as the fourth single. This song exploded as a crossover hit with not only rock fans but pop lovers as well. Interestingly, in contrast to the stubborn "Animal," "Sugar" took only two weeks to write and record.

It blazed up the charts, finally hitting number 2 on the Top 100. A video, featuring footage shot over two nights in Denver during the *Hysteria* concert tour, kept the song at number 1 for 85 days on Dial MTV and helped add another four million copies to the total albums sold during its time on the charts.

In 1991, MTV ranked "Pour Some Sugar on Me" as the number 1 video in its "Top 300 Music Videos of All Time." More recently, VH1 ranked this video juggernaut number 2 on their "100 Greatest Songs of the '80s."

FURTHER HYSTERIA

Wanting to keep up the momentum that "Sugar" generated, the next single, "Love Bites" was released in August 1988 and took the top spot on the Hot 100 chart for one week. In November 1988, "Armageddon It" was released and reached number 3 on the Hot 100 giving the band their fourth Top 10 hit in the US. The seventh and final single from the album was "Rocket," which was released in January 1989; it made it to the number 15 spot on the *Billboard* charts.

In 2006 a remastered two-CD, deluxe edition was released, which included the b-sides from the singles, remixes, video mixes and other additional tracks from the time the album. This is still available and is a must-have for any true Def Leppard fan.

All in all, Def Leppard's *Hysteria* was an album that took three years to write, record and produce, had wildly successful singles released over three years, and spent an amazing 96 weeks on the US Top 40 charts. *Hysteria* was RIAA-certified as "platinum" twelve times over, after selling more than 20 million copies worldwide.

On a more personal note, *Hysteria* was the first CD I bought after I got my first CD player for Christmas 1987, and it has always been in my rotation, even as I converted to digital music. When I started DJing I knew that "Pour Some Sugar On Me" was going to be a crowd-pleaser and I have regularly used it as part of my end-of-event power set, along with Bon Jovi's "You Give Love a Bad Name" and AC/DC's "(You Shook Me) All Night Long."

It's been twenty five years since I put the top down on my old red convertible, loaded *Hysteria* into the cassette player and cranked it to 11. My hair isn't as long or as full as it was in 1987, but when I recently bought a Mustang convertible, one of the first things I did was throw the top down and dial up "Pour Some Sugar On Me" on my plugged-in iPhone. As I cruised down the road I had to smile, with the magic of Def Leppard's *Hysteria* still there after all these years. **WB**

Digital Sugar Not So Sweet

Not satisfied with proposed compensation offered by Universal Music, Def Leppard has refused to let the company distribute digital versions of their classic catalog. However, they have taken a unique route around the problem: They have begun re-recording their hits. Essentially, Def Leppard has morphed into a cover band—playing covers of their own



music. Summer 2012 saw the release of the classics "Rock of Ages" and "Pour Some Sugar on Me."

As lead singer Joe Elliott told AP, "Our work is not available on any digital domain, except for the last album, the *Mirrorball* album, because it's a catalog issue with the record label, so we just wanted studio versions of those songs available for this summer because of the film coming out." The film he referenced was last summer's movie version of the Broadway hit, *Rock of Ages*, the buzz about which the band logically piggy-backed on to promote their summer tour.

Since the band controls the master tapes of their chart-busting two albums, they can dictate terms to Universal, keeping the huge music conglomerate from benefiting from digital distribution. But in order for the band to benefit, they have had to rely on music law that protects "cover versions" of songs performed or recorded by artists other than the original creators. Although they *are* the original creators, the newly re-recorded songs qualify as covers under the law.

(This sidebar based on information found at: <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/def-leppard-talk-tom-cruise-rock-ages> and http://news.cnet.com/8301-17852_3-57468120-71/def-leppard-covers-own-songs-to-get-digital-revenues/)

Inside Astro Entertainment

VIRGINIA DJ GROUP SOARS TO SUCCESS WITH UNIQUE BUSINESS MODEL

By Ryan Burger

At last September's Video DJ Conference in Las Vegas (<http://videodjconference.com>), Mobile Beat Publisher Ryan Burger came across Astro Entertainment, by way of DJ Larry D, who endorses Virtual DJ and several other product lines.

As the following conversation reveals, video is one major element of a both a wide and deep selection of services the company offers. It's also clear that the company functions with a unique variation of the multi-op concept. Through Skype he brought together more of the Astro Entertainment core team.

Ryan Burger: Someone give me the one-minute story about how Astro came together.

Greg Chappell: This is Greg Chappell. Started out with another gentleman at the time, started out as a radio announcer, and we ended up putting together a couple guys that were in radio as well and started up a mobile DJ service. At the time we only had five guys, and then as time went on we grew. Each year we grow a minimum of 10 percent.

Ten years ago we brought on all the partners here; Steve Waddle being the general manager and president. We grew the company from just being a DJ company to doing all types of entertainment events, such as casinos, audio/visual packages, uplighting, and things of that nature.

R B: So from what I understand from previous conversation, it's more of an agency type of setup, correct? You're not specifically a multi-op where the one company owns everything; it's more of a bunch of DJs working together... or is that the best way to describe it?

G C: ...We run it like you would have any service business where you can get a service, and we treat it that way...15 to 20 guys are full-time employees. Other guys, it is like an agency, the DJs that work for us out in the field. But our core is our 15 guys that run in the area; meaning that by having contacts with different coordinators—when you're a one-man operation, you're basically relying on a couple coordinators to help you out—

but if you're 15 to 20 strong, you have a whole pool of coordinators coming to you.

So we basically have that theory, that if you can have 15 to 20 guys...pulling us all together and running like a business, the day-to-day operations, and separating the two has really been our formula for success.

R B: So it just started out as a couple DJ getting together in some form and then it's just grown and grown from there?

G C: It kind of grew and grew...everybody has different divisions, but they run their division.

Roger Cruz: You figure like with a regular company, Monday through Friday, 9:00 to 5:00, we all have our divisions. I'm in charge of public relations. We have a head of operations. We have sales. We have customer service. We all have regular jobs within the company during the day, but no one is exempt from DJing. Everybody still DJs.

Steve Weddle: Yeah, we have about 18 guys on salary. And our field guys, about 18, not counting us in the office. But those 18 guys are doing the bulk of our work, as big as we are. The Saturdays are where you've got to cover everything. But giving a guy a 40-week has been the biggest advantage for us because we don't have to negotiate over our price for a job. We don't have to say, okay, let's bill for this; we've got to give you a percentage. We do 40 hours a week, and if we work them 27 hours, they still get paid for 40. If they go over 40 they get overtime. But it's a win-win for us. We've created a real job, and it feels like a real job. They get a vacation, benefits. We actually offer health insurance.

R B: Tell us a little bit about some of the bigger events you do. Larry was telling me a little bit about Liberty Tax, for instance, and all the stuff that goes with that...you're really producing the event for them.

G C: Sure. Yeah. Liberty Tax approached us about six, seven years ago and basically wanted us to put together the entire event, from the opening session, which would include guest speakers,





flying lights within the truss pieces in the ceiling, and then doing sound and sound reinforcement and lighting.

And then as time went on, obviously, we did all the entertainment for them—DJs, bands, outdoor events as far as bands, casino—coming up with an actual theme. We're in charge of decorations; getting teleprompters, stuff like that. They basically put us in charge of that event from start to finish, all aspects. And we do it every year—fortunately. That's our biggest one.

But here lately, our actual weddings have gotten bigger because we incorporate so many packages as far as the uplighting, like the wireless uplighting—we're the only ones in this area that have it. In one visual package we demonstrate how to dance on a video; we also incorporate montages, which is what Larry does; and combining pictures of the father/daughter growing up with the music. That's a huge hit for us here as well. That's really what we do best.

Hampton Roads, being a military town, we also do the big ship parties here, the Navy's aircraft carriers. The carriers are a huge event for us. We'll have casino nights, where we have up to 60 tables and then four DJs at that event. And that would include also flying truss, speakers, sound, lighting and all that.

R B: Of the gross dollars spent with your company, what percentage do you still consider purely DJ?

SW: DJ is where the root of things start, but probably it's cut down to about a quarter—25 to 30 percent; where obviously 10 years ago it was 99 percent. I think it's key to say that we don't go into markets we don't need to go into, or fields, meaning photography, wedding photography, limousines. You know, we're always on the cutting edge, trying to see what can we add to our service...Anytime you can add a service that you can be good at, you add that to your bundle package. For things like photography, we still have referrals out there we want to keep.

...It still starts with the DJ. It starts with a call coming in, someone needs entertainment, and

then you go off that to the other divisions that have been successful.

Photo booths have been a great source of income without even investing really any money, if that makes sense. I mean, you hook up with someone like Kingdom Photo Booth, who sets up a great plan for you. And we budget a certain amount of money and we borrow from them, so really no money down, and so we created a revenue source with no money investment. And it took off.

R B: How do your clients hear about you? Are you heavy on the bridal fair scene, the bridal publications, referrals?

G C: One of the keys is getting into venues. Coordinators are very, very important. We are going straight for the venues and making them our—as in a football team—our 12th man. We're making our venues our extra salespeople, and we're making them feel like part of the sales team here, that they now can add it to their packages. And the hotels love it because there's an incentive for them: They get a percentage. But it also enables us to not have an extra salesperson here, so we're able to pass that money to them. Roger can speak more about exposure.

R C: So far as our company's concerned, we have a very good product and we know it. The key just getting people out there to realize the product that we have. We have meetings with coordinators, photographers, caterers, and also the venues. We visit these venues, develop really good working relationships with them. They tend to like us, and then we show them the packages that we have. And they're so jazzed about all the things that we offer so far as DJing, uplighting, photo booths, casino-themed events, green screen technology—all these things we have to offer that they can offer their brides or their corporate clients. The more products they offer and they buy from us, the better bundle package we can provide.



DJ Richard Davis leads the Wobble.

And it's streamlined for the client, so that the only person they have to call is the venue. They want uplighting? They call the venue. If they want DJs, they call the venue, etc.

As an incentive, we have special referral programs that we offer to the representatives from the venues or the caterers or the coordinators.

S W: ...Also in terms of exposure, we do all the bridal shows. Some we pay and some we get on trade, whether we have a venue or a bridal show where we provide sound. But it's important to continue to stay out there and market ourselves and not just rely on the venues...

R B: One other area I'm real interested in is training. How do you get your guys on the line? How long does it take until they become a lead on, say, a \$3,000 prom?

S W: Really we don't bring in a lot of new guys, but when we do, quite honestly it's from catering staffs, from bartenders—

R C: —People we meet at parties—

S W: —people we meet at parties. Very selective. And not a lot of training.

R C: I handle all the DJ interviews for the company, and what we particularly look for is guys with really strong, confident personalities. We're looking for the quintessential "cool guy."

...You can teach anyone how to press play on a controller; you can't teach anyone how to be cool and to be charismatic and to be charming and to be confident on the microphone. So that's a main thing we look for a lot. Music knowledge will come in time. But that's my take on our training and our interviewing. Once we find that quintessential cool guy, we can just take it all from there.

R B: What else do you want to make sure people know about Astro Entertainment?

Larry Dotterer: I would like to touch on video. We've been doing music video in the mitzvah market since probably 15 years ago, with just DVD players or whatever. And now we are bringing it to wedding receptions. It's blowing up in wedding receptions. What we're doing is we're not just



going to your wedding reception and playing a music video at all. We're going there and we're doing pre-production. We do the bride and groom's logo, real beautiful on the screen with the color theme of the event, with linens or whatever; name spinning around or whatever.

Another thing we're doing is for the first dance we'll take their dating and engagement pictures and drop them in while they're dancing. But we're not only just playing the pictures like a slideshow. Any DJ company could do that, too. We actually pre-produce the pictures with the music video...Imagine the father/daughter dance with pictures of the bride and her dad since she was a little baby, all the way till the wedding; and during the chorus of the song, it's actually Louis Armstrong on the screen like he's there in the room, singing "What A Wonderful World." It's very emotional. There's not a dry eye in the room.

R B: And that's where some studio work comes on—done with Vegas Pro [video production software], in your case.

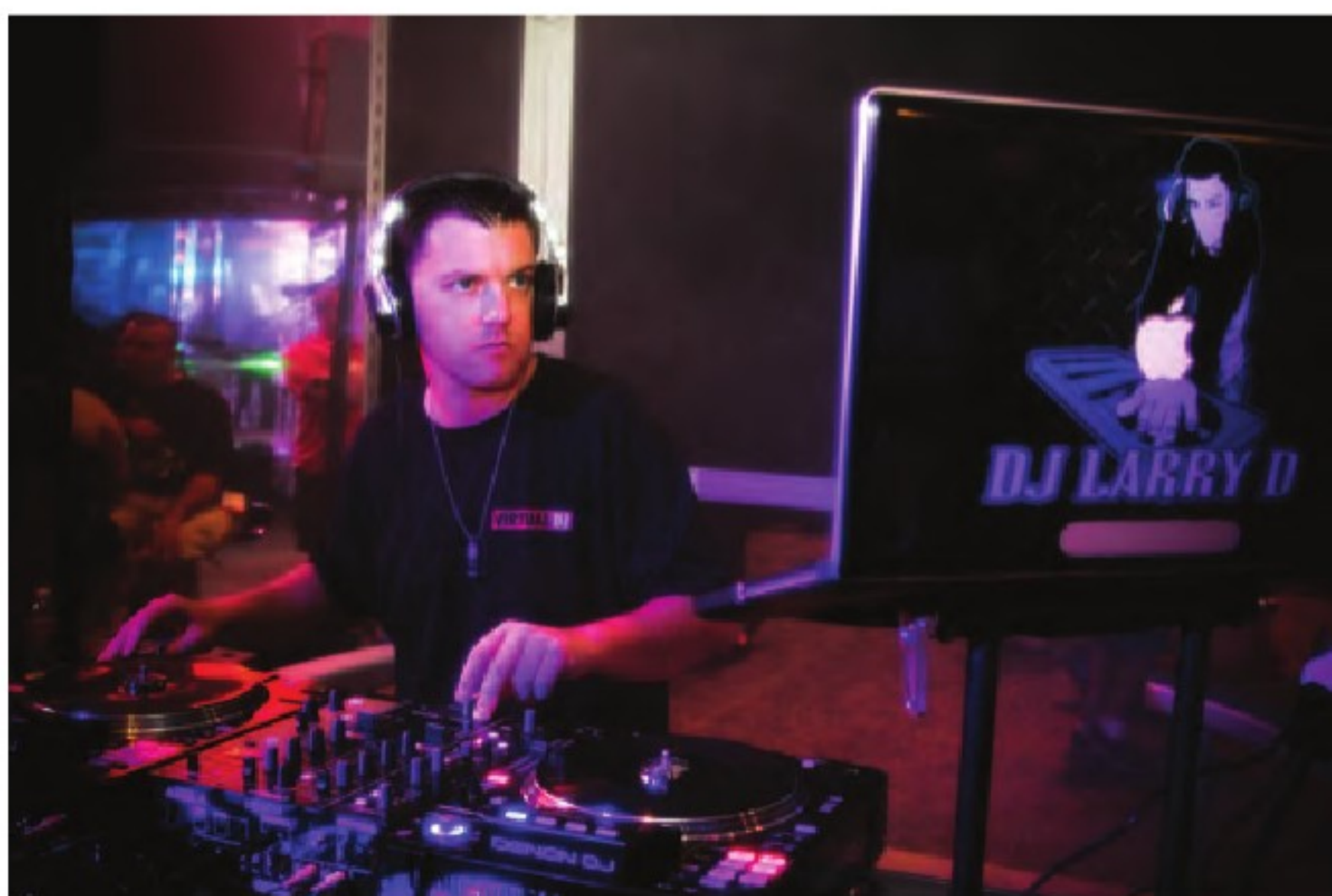
S W: ...When you have someone like Larry that's very creative, there are so many more things you can do. We used to do just music videos, and now it's escalated and involved more and more. Because people are looking for the next big thing, but there's really not a next big thing. There's just small tweaks to what we already do, I think.

R B: So a big part of it is the personalization, making them feel special.

L D: Absolutely.

S W: And that would be one of our biggest things about customer service. We use InfoManager...and whenever that bride calls in, we're going to document everything—any question she has—the little things...You know, you talk to the bride and she tells you something about the groom, and then when the groom calls in you're able to say that little remark about the groom—"Hey, I heard you're a big AC/DC fan," or whatever; they're impressed by that. You can't do that without treating it like a real business. **ME**

For more about Astro Entertainment, head over to AstroDJ.com



Mixify Amplifies a DJ's Reach

DAVID MORICCA ON MIXIFY'S INNOVATIVE, ONLINE DJ BROADCASTING AND INTERACTION PORTAL

Mobile Beat: We found out about a new service that DJs can use to spread the word about their mixes, about their style and a lot of other info. We're here with David Moricca, the founder and CEO of Mixify. David, tell us a little about your background and where Mixify came from.

David Moricca: Sure. So our company has actually been in existence for a little over a year, but we really kind of got to Mixify through the buildout of an initial platform called Breakout Band. Breakout Band, which we launched in 2011, is an online music production platform primarily targeting younger kids, which enabled them to make their own beats online and record their own vocals. What we found in building out that platform was that the audience, even the younger audience, was trending away from pop and hip-hop, which Breakout Band was predicated on, and much more into what is now being called EDM, dance music and kind of the whole DJ world.

And so at that point we took a step back, really explored the whole space of dance music and the DJ category, and we thought, given our visual expertise, that we could build a platform where DJs could really market themselves and live-broadcast themselves to fans all around the world; something we saw was not really being addressed in a very fan-friendly way when we started looking at it.

M B: The first thing that comes to mind is that this is going 10 generations past what DJs used to do on MySpace to spread the word about themselves. We're talking a live kick and hearing the whole mix and stuff like that, right?

D M: Yeah. The whole concept is predicated on the live stream or live broadcast. It's basically connecting DJs with their fans in real time. And DJs have three ways that they can live-stream on the platform. They can do a pre-recorded mix if they like; but they also have the ability to plug in their external hardware and live-stream, say, from physical events or from their homes.

And we also have a new feature that leverages IceCast, with no plugging in at all, but to live-stream stereo using your CDJs or your hardware. And this all occurs in virtual venues where fans congregate and can basically socialize with the DJs, socialize with other fans. They can hype out their favorite parts of the mix; they can chat. So it's meant to be to not only a great audio experience but also a very social one.

M B: So the disc jockey doesn't really need to much, other than installing a little plug-in that actually takes it and sends it up to you guys, correct? He or she can sit there and mix

like you normally would with Serato or whatever, and then just feed it to you guys?

D M: Well, even better than that. There's actually no plug-in. There's no software download. That's kind of the differentiator. It's all web-based. If they do a pre-recorded mix, obviously they're uploading the mix to the server. But in the case of a live stream, there is no software download. You can plug in your hardware or you can leverage our IceCast solution to basically be live-streaming without downloading software.

M B: Okay. So can you take us through a bit of this?

D M: Sure...I actually just took us into an existing event at Mixify.com, which is happening with an up-and-coming DJ, some young DJ from Chicago who goes by The Mu.

By the way, the platform, the way it works is DJs can have events on here anytime, whether they're the bedroom DJs just getting started all the way up to the biggest DJs who kind of are supporting the up-and-comers and the estab-



lished DJs alike. Here we have a DJ who just scheduled an event for today, and fans have congregated in here to hear him livestream. So he's using a direct Mixify stream. Basically this audio's being live-streamed from his hardware.

And from a fan perspective, they obviously get to chat; there's a group chat. You can see—if you click over to the right you can see the attendee list of all the different people who are in there. And if you like various parts of the mix, you can click the "hype" button. This DJ already has 583 hypes in his mix. And so ultimately that data is going to be provided to the DJ so they can see how people hype their mix along the arc of it—when was it really hot, when were people less

interested in the mix—so you can make yourself a stronger mix maker as you go.

And from a marketing perspective -- as you'll see, the DJ's represented as an avatar, and you'll see some of the visual changes we're making.

But in front of the DJ is all his social media assets. So not only is it about promoting this DJ on Mixify, but it's about driving this DJ, fans and followers in their other social ecosystems. We integrated the 1-click Facebook "Like" so you don't even have to leave the page to become a Facebook fan of this artist. On Facebook, Mu has 1,246 fans right now...and we also his Twitter feed, and his SoundCloud links so that you can ultimately follow him in those other places as well... From a fan engagement perspective, they can really grow by engaging some of their distant fans.

A lot of DJs who produce their own tracks will do release parties where they basically release some new mixes and some new tracks for their fans, and oftentimes will do some kind of giveaway as part of that. And obviously DJs who play at live venues will often use this as an extension. Like "Hey, I know you can't be with me at this venue or at this festival, but I'm bringing it to you digitally on Mixify." So those are some interesting and different ways that DJs use the platform.

M B: So tell us more about how Mixify came about.

D M: Just to give you a little bit of history on the company, we went live in public beta late July, so we've very new. We've only been live with the platform for about three to four months; we're obviously coming out of beta. But during our beta period we've gotten a pretty strong adoption, especially from the small and growing/emerging DJ community. We have about 200,000 unique visitors on the platform, and I think in the ensuing months we're going to be seeing a lot of partnership activities with the launch of our new interface that'll enable even more fans and DJs to connect on the platform. We've also just introduced a new interface.

...After our first three to four months out in the market, both in talking to our current audience—a very active and vocal community of DJs—as well as talking to some of our strategic partners, really got a sense of where they wanted us to take the platform to really enhance it, particularly from a visual standpoint. So what we realized was that bringing in custom visual or video would be very, very powerful to enhance that visual experience; essentially transforming Mixify from an audio streaming platform into really an audiovisual experience. We call Mixify "the never ending electronic music festival." With this new interface we're getting



pretty close, I think, to what we believe a digital festival should feel like. Essentially the big changes are that a DJ (or a label, a festival, a partner like that) will be able to customize the visual experience.

...You'll see the DJ's information, all his social media links on there. But behind the DJ now is actually a custom visual experience where a DJ can program a YouTube playlist of videos to play behind them or even upload their own videos to have a visual experience that's custom for the event and mix what they're sharing.

M B: Okay. So it's not necessarily music videos by any means, but the video's expressing the mood of what they're trying to do with their music.

D M: Exactly...We're going to have a whole slew of really high-quality visual assets from VJs that are going to be provided for basic users. They'll be able to pick a visual theme that fits with their mix. And ultimately if a DJ wants to customize, they will be able to; it will be part of our subscription platform.

M B: Fantastic.

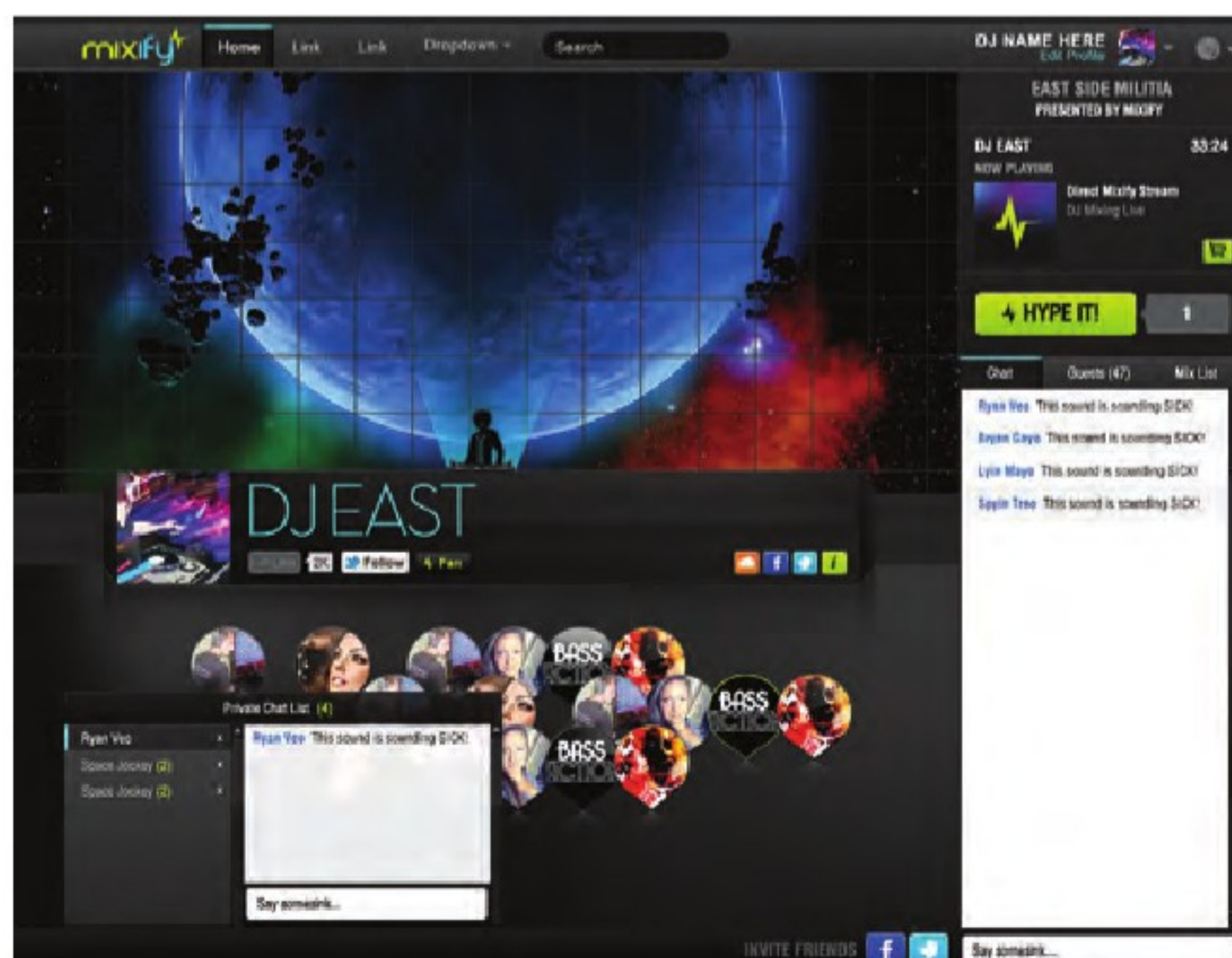
D M: That's one major change. And then the other big change is we have moved away from avatars for the fans and have replaced that with actual user images—talking to a lot of the fans and realizing that our audience was a little bit older in age. Really, our audience is about 15 to 28. That's really our sweet spot. The more they talked, the more they said they want to be represented as themselves and be able to really socialize with other people in an easier way.

M B: What do DJs need to know to get involved?

D M: Sure. Well, first of all it's totally free to use and there's no limitation on the number of events a DJ can have on the platform. We literally have DJs who do events every single day. A few of them have actually become pretty high on

the fan charts on Mixify. So it's free to use. Onboarding is pretty straightforward. We have kind of a really pretty clean, easy onboarding dock to help people quickly get started, depending on what their preferred hardware is; or if they so choose, pre-recorded mix.

...DJs can do events, as many as they want. The way this works (and this is going to get modified a little bit with the new interface), basically there's event information. So you name your event, describe it, because



then it gets featured on the home pages. You put a start time to your event. Currently you select a venue for your event, which is going to get changed to select a visual theme for your event. And then you also select your mixing options. So as I mentioned, there's three different mixing options: the direct input, the IceCast input, and then there's the upload mix. And that's it.

And then you basically set up your event. Between setting up your event and starting your event, it's all about promotion. So tweet it out, share it on Facebook, let all your friends know that you're doing this live event, live mix. And then you have the event and post-event. You also can record your mixes so that the mix then lives on your profile on Mixify post-event. And you can also share that mix out into your social media as well, as it's playable within Facebook.

...So, again, to answer your question, it's free to use. We are going to be offering a premium package or a subscription service which enables you to upgrade and get more services on the platform; basically significantly more storage, you've be able to customize your visual experience. You'll also be able to get in-depth analytics on your events such as full access to the chat log; the hype meter, which measures the hype of the mix throughout the course of the mix; and also



some information—geographic and age demographics on the fans that came through to your event.

M B: Is there anything you want the average disc jockey to know at this point about Mixify, other than get in there and try it?

DM: I would just say get in there and try it. We're seeing some really nice growth around the platform; got some really interesting strategic partners starting to get involved and bigger DJs even using the platform. For example, recently Crystal Method did a live stream using Mixify from Philadelphia, PA. So that's been one really big DJ that's using the platform. And there's a host of other larger DJs that are starting to adopt the platform. So what we're finding is that Mixify can certainly support the emerging DJ as well as the really established DJs alike, and I think there's a really nice cross-pollination between those.

I think the other big thing is that this platform really services the fans in a way that most other live streaming platforms we've seen before haven't. So we want to make it a great experience and a marketing platform for the DJ, but also a great experience for the fans who will keep coming back, both to see DJs they already love and find new DJs on the platform. **MB**

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Combining Forces

CHAUVET DJ is set to introduce nearly 30 new products, showcasing the latest fixtures designed mobile entertainers in a booth constructed using nearly 300 pieces of versatile TRUSST® trussing. In addition to the launch of the new CORE™ series of high-impact fixtures, new additions are set to join the Intimidator™ series



of powerful moving heads and scanners, the Freedom™ series of wireless, battery-operated fixtures and the SlimPAR™ series of low-profile wash lights.

An effect light and fogger in one unit, the **Geyser™ RGB** makes a bold statement as it blasts a vertical stream

of safe, water-based fog while simultaneously illuminating it with 21 high-power, 3-watt RGB LEDs. Another combo unit, the **Scorpion™ Burst GB** merges the visual appeal of a scanning graphics laser and the room-filling coverage of a burst-style laser into one product. Blue and green lasers project up to 24 integrated graphic effects, while a burst filter replicates the effect and projects it around the room. For more these, and CHAUVET DJ's other exciting debuts, please visit them online.



www.chauvetdj.com

Going Places

ADJ's NAMM debuts might give one the impression that the company's lighting products are "going places" being built around the theme of bringing greater mobility to today's hottest lighting trends. Some of the must-see "geared-to-go" items on display at ADJ's NAMM booth include: **Mega Go Flood Par**, a battery-powered RGB color wash; **Mega TRI38 Sys**, a pack-and-go complete LED wash system; and the **Inno Color Beam 12**, a lightweight RGBW effect that's a more mobile version of the intense, narrow beam effects that are so popular at large clubs.

The Inno Color Beam 12's mesmerizing, narrow, razor-like beams



"cut like a knife" through washes and other lighting effects, putting the hot trend of the "intense beam effect" within the reach of mobile entertainers. This ultra-compact effect shoots out brilliant 15°-angle shafts of light via 12 x 3-watt 50,000-hour CREE LEDs (3 each red, green, blue and white). It provides smooth RGBW color mixing and also all-white for a truly stunning effect. For more on this, and ADJ's many other new products, check out their website.

www.americandj.com

"P" Is for Punch

Cerwin-Vega's new **P-Series professional PA system** delivers power and bass punch suited for just about any sound reinforcement application. The series includes two active speaker products: the P1500X and the P1800SX.

The P1500X is the heart of the P-Series. This two-way, bi-amped, full-range bass-reflex speaker employs a 15-inch woofer and high-frequency compression driver, powered by a custom Class-D amp. The P1500X is a versatile product that can be used as a single speaker for a small venue, set in pairs for a larger venue needing more coverage and SPL, or side mounted as a floor monitor for a band. The speaker boasts a supremely beefy 1500W of power.

The P1800SX is the muscle of the system. The powered subwoofer employs an 18-inch woofer with a custom 2000W Class-D amp in a hardwood cabinet, designed to deliver Cerwin-Vega's signature bass punch and extreme low end response.

Both pieces have frequency-shaping controls, a VEGA BASS boost and a high-pass filter switch (as a built-in crossover).

www.cerwin-vega.com



Monster Mash

BUILDING FRANKENSONG WITH MASHUP

By Arnaldo Offermann

I loved Mixed in Key so much, I had to jump on their newest offering: Mashup. This program allows most DJs to do what once looked like a daunting task: create amazing mashups within minutes.

The software is simple to the point of looking like this is a trick question. Once opened, you'll see your main work area and



a track search area; just search for the track and drop it in, and you've begun creating your own mashups. I say "trick question" on the interface because I expected something a bit more complex, something that offered tons of options that promise awesomeness, but would actually confuse the heck out of me.

"Nay," Mashup says, "just follow your instincts."

I read NOTHING of the instructional manual nor watched the handy tutorial at first. I did glance over it to see what extra goodies there might be waiting for me, and I did notice some extra options.

So how did I create my first mashup on Mashup? I found an a cappella of a song that I liked and dropped it in. Then I searched for "instrumentals" and my list popped up. However, this list was not in alphabetical order, instead it was sorted by "harmonic compatibility." Sweet nuggety goodness, I thought, this software thinks for me? You betcha, and it doesn't do a bad job, either. To be fair, this was done through the magic of Mixed in Key's music analysis technology (see my review in the last MB), so make sure you get that first; you won't regret it!

Measuring the a cappella's BPM was a surprising accomplishment, since there was no detectable beat. I started dropping some instrumentals in and I noticed that it automatically synced up the BPMs for me. But Mashup also provides the option to shift either song manually to make the mix sound better. My elements were slightly off from where I wanted them, so I did employ this feature.

A few fun features allowed me to modify volume and EQ along different points in each track. I was also able to trim the track to a shorter length, which allowed me to drop multiple

beats in there and create a song that changed beats more than Cher changes clothes.

After a few tweaks, I was happy with my new Frankensong and I quickly exported it out.

What makes this software really easy to use is that on the surface it looks like most popular audio editing programs. Within a few seconds of using it, you'll have a feel for where every feature is and you'll instinctively know what to do next.

Is this the be-all and end-all tool for creating mashups? Indeed, there are more complex options that allow filters, plug-ins, and other tweaks, but they also come at a higher cost and a higher learning curve. Mashup allows the average DJ to start pumping out custom tracks immediately, which is perfect for those times when you think of a pair of great songs that really go well together.

Take it on the go, too! It's available on iOS as well as Mac and PC. Mashup, from the makers of the super-handy Mixed in Key, is a must-have tool that you shouldn't miss, if you want to easily generate great song combinations. **MB**

www.mixedinkey.com

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Two for the Show

SOME FRESH LIGHTING IDEAS FROM NEWER INDUSTRY PLAYERS

By Ryan Burger

Neo-Neon (Neo-Entertainment), a big name in the international entertainment lighting industry, is prepping for a blitz on the US market, through their American Lighting brand. While they do have many of the same kinds lights that you will find with other manufacturers, I found some unique in their catalog that will definitely be of interest to DJs.

The Neo Flash 300 offers a different approach to the strobe light concept, with six strobing zones covering the 180° of the unit's surface. The zones allow the strobes to move in quite a

unique way. You do have to pay for this extra functionality (it has a street price around \$600), but if strobes are a big part of your lighting excitement, this might be just the ticket for raising your wow factor. (Three-zone and single-zone versions are also available.) With DMX control, plus built in auto, sound-activated

and master/slave options, this strobe adds a few levels of excitement to the typical strobe experience. A light to be seen without a doubt. Pictures don't do it justice, but you can see it in action at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLLttNZmf_U.

Another unique piece that Neo-Entertainment sent me to look at is the LED Gemini 36T. In this case, the surprising approach is having LEDs on both sides of the unit's moving head (18 on each side, for a total of 36 tricolor LEDs). The light has major tilt and infinite pan possibilities. Control once again is DMX, auto, sound-active, and master/slave. With 18 bright LEDs on each side, this light's motion really stood out from my other moving heads. While you would need to have two or four of these to make a strong impact on a light show, if mounted nice and high programmed well, the effect would be massive. (Action footage at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INkIMBS1ylo>.)

For other pieces from Neo-Entertainment check out their website and their YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/NEONEONLIGHTING>. **MB**

www.neo-entertainment.com

The Weather System by Blizzard Lighting is an LED bar-format light similar to those put out by many other lighting companies over the last four years or so. However, Blizzard has changed things up nicely with, instead of four flat heads mounted to the bar, this system has eight fixtures that are much brighter than those found in first-generation LED bars.

Where in the old days you would have had four PAR 64 cans on a tripod with a dimmer pack or chase controller, the Weather System replaces the four cans with eight LED fixtures, plus a controller right in the t-bar of the tripod. This unit really shows how LEDs can really hold their own when it comes to simply brightening up an area.

The heads mounted on the bar are newer 3w tri-color LEDs and will nicely illuminate an entire dance floor all by itself, for receptions or smaller school dances. But I would recommend teaming this unit up with an effects light that has motion and some sort of slower mirror ball type effect. The Weather System by itself has plenty of built-in programs, sound-activation, and of course can be addressed with DMX or hooked into a master/slave setup.

In my testing, after removing it from its convenient guitar case-style carrying bag, I was able to quickly mount it to the included tripod. A foot control unit plugs in via a convenient 1/4" jack on the back (unlike other units with four-pin connectors). The foot control unit provide four modes, in contrast to past units that had only three (autorun, sound-active, freeze and



blackout), and was very easy to use.

You can get an idea of what the Weather System can do at the Blizzard site, or be among the first DJs to check this light out in person at MBLV17 in February 2013! **MB**

www.blizzardlighting.com

CHAUVET's VIP Rewards



Mobile Beat: We are here with Navah Berg. She is the director for Chauvet's VIP rewards program. Navah, tell us a little bit about your inspiration for putting this all together.

Navah Berg: Well, we wanted to give back to our customers. Chauvet DJ has always been associated with value, innovation, and performance—VIP, for short. Why not do a Chauvet DJ VIP rewards program? So the purchase of a Chauvet DJ product now carries more value than ever, because it's giving back, essentially, with free merchandise.

And not just yesterday's merchandise. We're doing our new cutting-edge wireless LED lighting, LED lighting bars—all of that we're making available for redemption. And we want to give back, so that's where the program really started.

M B: Tell us a little bit about the flow. Obviously it's not complicated, but how do DJs get these points registered in your system?

N B: Great question. You know, when I think of this program I think simple, straightforward, and transparent. We really wanted to make it easy, so we have a website, ChauvetVIP.com. You go on, you register, you put your items in that you purchased, and then you send us your UPC codes. You just have to be from the USA and purchase from our authorized Chauvet dealers, which you can check out on our site, ChauvetLighting.com.

M B: So what do they do at that point? Once they've purchased the Chauvet product, what do they need to do to use the points in the system?

N B: You're logged in, you select the item you want. Like, say you want a Freedom Strip Mini, you go on there, you check the redemption and you click the product and we send it to you.

...Our main thing was we wanted to make it easy for you and we wanted to give back. Our points system gives the most points in the industry, up to triple the amount sometimes. So we really wanted to focus on simplicity and giving back and being very straightforward and transparent with our customers, because we wouldn't be here without them.

M B: Is there anything else that you want the average DJ to know about Chauvet in general?

N B: Chauvet DJ is here to bring out the new cutting-edge products, and that's why we're into wireless LED lighting right now. We're pushing forward with pixels too. We really want to give them value, innovation, and performance. That's our mission. And also give back, to thank them; because again, our program is here for them. We thank them. We want them to get free stuff. And why not?

M B: So ChauvetDJ.com is the main website for the DJs to check out. ChauvetVIP.com will have specific information on there. I know you've got a nice video showing a bunch of the Chauvet staff talking about how simple it is and showing products that they can get through the system.

N B: Absolutely. You can go on YouTube and see it, too. Our YouTube channel is username "ChauvetLighting." **MB**



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24 watt
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DL75



50 watt
PX500/D1220



75 watt
PX750/D1220

ColorMaker controls have a range of +400 feet and operate on 916 MHz which is isolated from the busy WIFI bands and other wireless DJ equipment. We offer the most advance hand held controls on the market today and the most variety of LED fixtures from centerpiece fixtures to powerful wall washers.

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Build Your Own DJ Computer System

PART TWO OF TWO

By Richard McCoy

Now that you've built your own rackmount computer system as described in part one, it's time to integrate this computer with all the other audio and video components you'll need to produce a complete, operational DJ system. The computer selected in part one is designed to be light-weight, compact, reliable, and versatile. With its ability to be upgraded and modified as new technology becomes available, this computer should last for many years of good service without purchasing a new box. But a computer by itself will not provide everything you need for all aspects of your performances.



To ensure the ease of transportation and the ruggedness required for mobile applications, all the components will be assembled into a light-weight, rugged fiberglass container. The case has a capacity of 10U spaces on top and 6U spaces in front. The bottom two front spaces will be occupied by the computer. The third space up contains a 1U strip with right and left XLR audio outputs and 110 volt AC plugs for easy access to the powered speakers. This row also contains an extra 110V AC plug and two composite video outputs (BNC jacks) from the mixer. This homemade strip will allow convenient front panel hook ups for powered speakers and karaoke video monitors.

Above that will be two spaces used for the slide out tray holding the MIDI software controller. The top space will

contain a 1U disc player. This arrangement allows for proper air circulation to prevent overheating. The importance of proper ventilation cannot be overstated; overheating is a real danger and could impact the overall system's operation.

In the top section, the bottom four spaces have a flat piece of aluminum (painted black) where keyboard and mouse sit. Above that is the karaoke mixer for audio and video control. Next up is the four-channel wireless microphone receiver. After that is the AC power conditioner. The last rows are used for mounting the computer monitor and a DJ microphone. The whole system should weigh only about 35 pounds.

All AC power cords can be plugged into the AC power conditioner including the three front panel power connectors used for the powered speakers. This will allow for a single AC power cord out the back to be used to power the entire system.

The API 1U CD/DVD player can also

accommodate MP3

and CD+G formats. This can be used for karaoke singers who provide their own CD+G discs or it can play standard CDs or MP3 audio discs, making it a CD audio backup player. The players' audio and video outputs can be connected directly to the mixer.

The VocoPro DA-1000 mixer will accept two different audio and video input sources while providing two video outputs to drive projectors, large displays and singer monitors. A single button on the mixer will allow the DJ to switch between computer audio/video and DVD player sources. In addition, the mixer has three microphone inputs with separate echo effects for each mic. There are bass and treble controls for both the audio and microphone inputs. This is not a sophisticated, multifunction mixer, but it provides all the basic functions required by most DJs. You may decide to use another style of mixer if room permits.

It is possible to take the audio and video outputs from the DVD player and process them through the computer.



Richard has been an electronics hardware/software engineer in Silicon Valley for over 45 years, and is listed on several patents. During that same time, he has also operated as a mobile DJ, doing more than 4000 shows. Richard has contributed to the design of chips, graphics cards, audio and video systems, computers, and even satellites, as well as DJ lighting and sound equipment, while working for companies like Fairchild, Acer and Atari.



However, this is a more complicated procedure, and is not recommended for most DJs since it might impede the overall performance of the computer. The CD/DVD player should remain isolated from the computer so it can function as a music

source if the computer has a problem.

I use this system for 99% of all the shows I do. It can perform all the functions necessary for music, video and karaoke shows. I have over 100,000 music files, 15,000 videos and 10,000 karaoke files

in this system (all backed up with two external disks). With the XLR audio output connectors, any size or combination of powered speakers can be accommodated by the system. If necessary, additional power amplifiers can also be connected to the system. Occasionally I will use a "feedback eliminator" (they REALLY do work), when multiple microphones are used by members of the audience.

While this system is customized to my particular requirements and may not be the best choice for every DJ, it will still perform all the functions necessary for a great show, it is easily upgradable and extremely mobile. Of course you can design your own system using other parts to fit your particular needs; the overall idea here is to provide a very reliable and strong computer system for the average DJ to use. **MB**

Component cost may vary dependent upon your source and are subject to change. The cost numbers shown above are reasonable estimates for building the system. Products mentioned in this article are those selected by the author and are not endorsed by Mobile Beat.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Complete Computer-Based Rackmount DJ Systems

Parts	Configuration 1 (Best)		Configuration 2 (Minimum)	
Assembled Computer	RM-2254	\$1,120.00	RM-2255	\$565.00
Molded Plastic DJ Case	Gator GRC 10-6	\$250.00	Gator GRC 10-6	\$250.00
Raxxess 1U Sliding Rack Shelf		\$50.00		\$50.00
API DV-330 CD/DVD/MP3/CD+G Player		\$138.00		\$138.00
VocoPro DA-1000, 3 Mic Digital Echo Mixer		\$129.00		\$129.00
Power Conditioner	Furman M-8Dx	\$102.00	Furman M-8Lx	\$70.00
Wireless Microphone System	Hisonic HSU8900HT (4 mics)	\$399.00	Hisonic HSU288 Dual UHF Sys	\$180.00
DJ Software Controller	Hercules DJ Console RMX 2	\$191.00	Hercules DJ Console RMX 2	\$191.00
Misc Audio/Video/Power Cables		\$40.00		\$20.00
TOTALS		\$2,419.00		\$1,593.00

Prices shown are based upon advertised sale prices and may vary from region to region.

What's Next?

STANDING OUT REQUIRES A SOLID STRATEGY

By Jim Papa

So you're a single operator. You love to play music. You love to meet new people. You love it when people respond to your hard work. You don't even mind working late at night, weekends and holidays. You enjoy your work a lot; but when the music stops, the lights dim and the crowd goes home, you are always asking yourself, "How do I book more events? How can I make more money? What's next?"

Over the years I have attended various conventions, seminars and networking events. Meeting DJs from around the world you become aware that many of the problems and difficulties you are facing in trying to grow your business are shared by DJs everywhere. What you realize is that there is no magic pill for success, except for hard work; and with a few exceptions there is no right or wrong way to do things. Ultimately, to consistently book more events, you need to find out what you are good at and work hard to make yourself different *and* better than your competition.

EVERYONE IS A DJ

With technology making it easier and easier to acquire and play songs, it seems like just about anyone who enjoys playing music can declare themselves "a real live DJ." Nowadays, everyone has a family member or knows someone who believes that they are qualified. In the media they are everywhere. Does *Jersey Shore* ring a bell? Without any training, knowledge or practice, many of these weekend wannabes gather a list of songs that they personally enjoy and go through the motions in front of people they know. Somehow, regardless of their preparation or their ability, they make everyone believe they are very talented. It reminds me of when someone considers themselves to be a great singer just because the crowd encourages them at some local karaoke venue. Many of these singers are being mocked behind their back, while others are being encouraged solely by family members. Many have absolutely no singing talent at all and sound simply awful. If you don't believe me, just watch *American Idol*. Besides the great talent discovered over the years, the producers have made hundreds of millions of dollars showcasing these clueless singers.

A born performer, Jim Papa has been singing since age eight, and in 1996, began Magical Music Entertainment, a karaoke/DJ entertainment business based on Long Island. In 2001 he decided to live out his dream and made Magical Music a full time venture. Since then he has entertained at hundreds of weddings, private parties, fund raisers and more. Today he sings and entertains at over two hundred events a year and has become one of the area's most requested entertainers.

People like these would probably also assume that it's easy being a DJ. We have all worked events where someone in the crowd comes up to us and says that they are a "DJ too." Often they try to stand next to us while we are working and want to, "talk shop." They like to compare gear or music, and may even suggest what to play. My question is, why would such a great talent not be working that gig?

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE?

Try to find a DJ for an event you are personally planning, without using a friend, colleague or your personal knowledge of the business and you will see how hard it is to choose. Companies tend to market themselves in pretty much the same way. They sometimes use the same catch phrases, tag lines and bragging points. All of them try to convey that they are the biggest, the

best or the most experienced. When a customer chooses a DJ company solely on the basis of what they read or what they see on a website, it can be hit or miss. When the event is over, success, mediocrity or failure to deliver is simply accepted by the customer.

A successful event leaves everyone happy but a bad job by the DJ will be remembered for a long time. If this happens, the customer probably won't use that DJ company again. But

unless the customer is a catering hall or restaurant owner, or they are a party planner, their need to hire a DJ may not come up very often.

Given the relative rarity of most people's entertainment needs, when a person does have the need, you want to make sure that they call you. That's why successful DJs know that the best advertising comes from those who have witnessed a great live event, and who, in turn, give a good referral.

STAND OUT!

To stand out, simply don't do what everyone else does. Concentrate on specific talents that you have that can separate you from everyone else. Find a niche. Some of these talents or skills may include being able to entertain as a singer, dancer, KJ, game show host, light show guru, charismatic MC or magician. Before you go ahead and promote these talents make sure you are comfortable with these skills and are able to deliver them on a professional level. You can also promote yourself as a DJ with a specific style, a DJ who provides a certain type of music or one that specializes only in a specific area, like high school dances or upscale events.

It really doesn't matter what your niche is. You just need to find what you are good at, what you can really deliver, and promote yourself effectively. For example, if you specialize in



Latin music and speak Spanish, over time you can gain a reputation as the DJ who speaks the language and has experience in handling successful Latin events. As a specialist, this can differentiate you and make it extremely hard for other DJs to compete in that area. In addition, you can offer your expertise as a skill that's hard to find and charge more for your talent.

Of course, whatever niche you choose, you should always be able to provide music from all genres at a moments notice, just in case. While you become the best DJ in your particular niche, you can still offer things like karaoke, game shows or photo booths, but consider these additions or up-sells, unless of course your specialty niche is one of them. Of course, the flip side of finding your niche is a mistake a lot of DJs make: trying to be everything to everyone. If you do, chances are you'll end up with fewer gigs, rather than more.

MY EXAMPLE

As a single op DJ who also works as a singer/entertainer I entertain at over 225 events a year. My particular niche is offering

It really doesn't matter what your niche is. You just need to find what you are good at, what you can really deliver...

music as a DJ or singer for people who enjoy music from the 1930s through the 1980s. I specialize in entertaining senior groups, which includes a wide variety of venues, such as senior centers, hospitals, libraries, independent living, assisted living, rehab

facilities and adult day care. By offering music to these groups on a full time basis, I am not only able to find work on weekends, but I also book a lot of work during the week when much of my competition is not available.

These gigs allow me to perform in front of thousands of people each year. I meet residents, their families, visitors, customers and the staff of all of these organizations. In turn, by meeting all these people, I book all types of events throughout the year, including everything from backyard events to lavish, expensive weddings.

Over the years I have amassed many tips on how to have successful events, especially in front of senior crowds, which I will share in future articles. Until then, spend some time coming up with an answer to the question: What's next? **MB**

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Shut Out!

ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON GIGS YOU SHOULD BE BOOKING?

By Stu Chisholm

Over the years I'd seen the venue's ads in the bridal magazines and noticed that they always had a booth at the local bridal shows, but this was my first gig at the facility. After the setup and sound check, I made my customary walk-around "tour" as I always do when performing in a new hall; I take detailed notes on everything from which entrances are designated for loading in, to where the breaker boxes are. I came across the main office, an elaborate affair that resembled a gift shop more than a place of business. It was then I noticed the reason why it took nearly 30 years to be booked at this venue: their "one-stop shopping" packages.

It seems that they have their own in-house DJ service. And beyond that, my clients, a family who have used me for years, apparently had to pay a premium to have me as their DJ.

With an economy that is recovering oh-so-slowly, it appears that this trend has become ever more common. If a venue wants to generate more money despite booking fewer events, they have to offer more goods and services to the clients they do manage to attract. Just as I advise DJs in my book, *The Complete Disc Jockey*, these venues have opened up new revenue streams, such as offering photography, videography and DJ services of their own. In a nutshell, DJs are beginning to understand how photographers and videographers felt when they began adding those services to their own stable of offerings!

I have spoken to many DJs, some of whom are outraged, some even threatening to take legal action. The trouble is that, at least in my state, the venue doesn't run afoul of "restraint of trade" laws unless they actually lock out other services. Simply offering their own is not illegal; it's smart business.

DAMNED IF YOU DON'T...

More familiar to most of us are those venues that require DJ services to carry liability

insurance in order to work in the facility. And yes, that means that any service not carrying said insurance WILL be barred at the door. Some venues, due to their local laws, actually require the DJ service to provide them with an insurance certificate that specifically names their business.

Certainly liability insurance is something that every legitimate entertainment business should carry. Yet is this a reason to literally bar the door? How many of us began our DJ businesses having never even HEARD of such insurance? How many years did we operate successfully, ethically and professionally without it? Again, I'm not debating the wisdom of having a good liability insurance policy. I'm simply questioning whether or not this is being used as an excuse to bar the door to beginners and semi-professionals. Photographers hate to lose jobs to photo booths and disposable cameras. Videographers hate to lose jobs to "Uncle Ned" who has a digital camcorder and some editing software. As a DJ, I know I hate to lose a job to an amateur with an iPod and illegally downloaded music. Is our zeal to be "fully insured" really about protecting our business and client, or is it a way to shut out the competition?

The simplest way to remove the insurance barrier is simply to buy a policy. We don't have to like it, but considering how litigious our society has become, we could end up saving money (and even our whole business) in the long run. On the upside, going through the ADJA, NAME and other groups can lower the cost of a policy enough to make it affordable to just about anyone.

JOIN THE CLUB

Getting into a venue as their "in-house DJ" is a bit more difficult. Many have hired and trained their own entertainers. Others may require the DJ to work exclusively for their facility. If they're working with an outside company on a less strict basis, then there's the obvious downside of working for less money. After all, the venue will be doing all of the advertising, courting the clients and handling all of the paperwork. Since they see the DJ as an additional source of revenue, they will take a significant chunk of the money they collect for entertainment services. My bet is that the company they ultimate-





ly choose to work with is the company that gives them the biggest cut.

One venue in my hometown simply lets a handful of DJs have a space in their card rack with the understanding that the DJ will give them a cut of any event they book from their referral. Such practices used to be called “kickbacks” or “payola.” Today it’s called standard operating procedure. Sadly, it’s also not illegal.

KATIE BAR THE DOOR

Have you ever had a run-in with a banquet hall manager? Did you take too long to pack up and leave one night? Did an event go completely wrong where a

phrase Dr. Phil, would you rather be right, or would you rather be booked?

TALK IS CHEAP?

If the venues aren’t shutting you out, your own reputation could be. Again, you don’t have to be a bad DJ or even have a bad gig to get on someone’s bad side. Simply missing a request can make some people irate. Today, that someone might decide to take you to task online. Smart DJs will frequently Google themselves to see what people are saying about their services and performances. If a post is unfair, incorrect or even slanderous, you can usually get it removed, provide a rebuttal or even take

It’s no secret that banquet halls promote and recommend various services, but may also actively badmouth or even ban some services from their premises.

fight broke out, police were called and damage was done? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you might be on a venue’s blacklist. It’s no secret that banquet halls promote and recommend various services, but may also actively badmouth or even ban some services from their premises. DJs may even be operating in blissful ignorance, not even knowing they’re on such a list! One hall owner I know mentioned that he has banned several bands and DJs because he didn’t like the message on their T-shirts, or because they had an offensive bumper sticker on their vehicle! Could this have happened to you?

Your only clue might be that you don’t get any bookings in a venue where you once worked frequently. Referrals you once received suddenly dried up. Or you might have had a couple who you were sure were crazy about your service and would soon be booking, only to later become frosty, not returning your calls or even disappearing completely. One DJ I spoke with found out he was on a blacklist because his clients were family members, so unlike those clients who just vanish, he got the message loud and clear.

If you find yourself on such a list, there is little you can do about it beyond calling the venue, making a lunch date with the owner or manager and trying to convince them to remove your name. A simple “I’m sorry” could re-open the door to thousands of dollars in business. Even if you were totally in the right on all counts, pride can be expensive. To para-

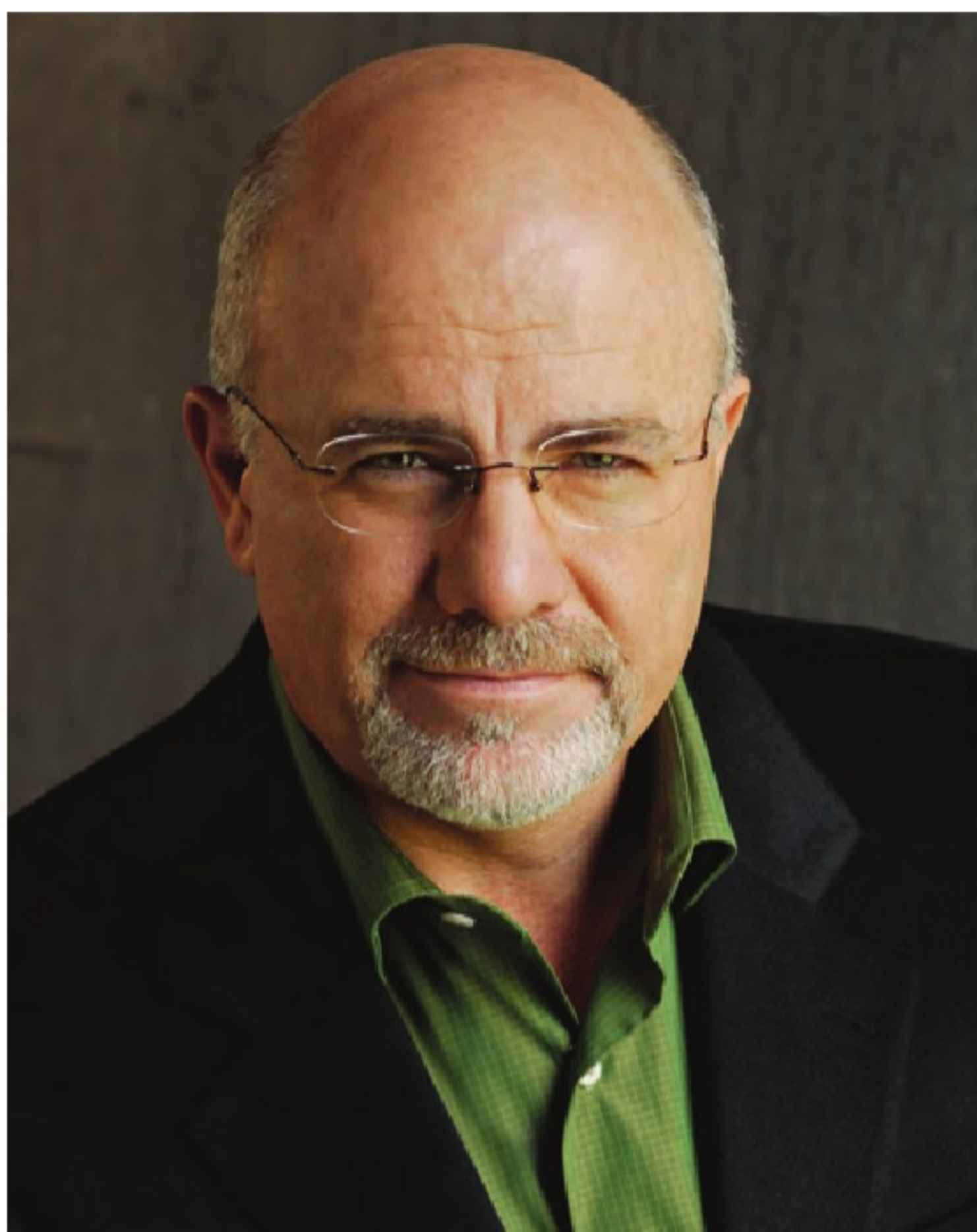
legal action. A single comment in the wrong ear can be costly!

CALLING IN THE CAVALRY

Some states consider purposely shutting out legal vendors a breach of “restraint of trade” law. In short, this means that it may be illegal for a business to erect artificial barriers between you and potential clients. The only way to know for sure is to consult an attorney if you feel that you have been unfairly singled out to be shut out from working in a specific venue. Such a move should always be a last resort, since it will never get you back on a preferred vendor’s list and may, in fact, permanently damage your business relationship. The upside is that they’ll think twice before doing it again and, should you one day find yourself working in their hall, you may regain some small bit of respect.

Party venues are constantly on the lookout for new ways to maximize their profits, making the in-house DJ and the “one stop shopping” concepts more and more pervasive. Getting bookings may well be more expensive and require some innovative thinking. In such an environment, it’s best to stay aware, make regular contact with the other vendors you work with—especially the banquet facilities—and maintain good overall relationships. Lastly, guard your good name. Good buzz opens doors, but negativity can close them just as quickly.

Until next time, safe spinnin’! **MB**



Hiring and Balancing

By Dave Ramsey

MAKING THE FIRST HIRE

Dear Dave,

I'm running my own business as a sole proprietor, but the place is growing beyond my capacity to handle it alone. I'd like to find someone to work with my clients and further generate sales. Do you have any advice on how to hire my first employee?

- Mike

Dear Mike,

I would put any first, new team member on a small base salary, plus a percentage of what the clients they work with generate. I mean, you've got to make sure they don't starve. But at this point it's not so much about what's "fair" as what works mathematically and seems reasonable to you.

I'd be willing to give them a bigger percentage in the early stages. Then, as the business grows and your rep becomes more successful, you could shift it to a smaller percentage and it would still mean more money. In other words, they'd probably rather have 10 percent of \$1 million than 25 percent of \$20. Cut them in early at a bigger rate, but reserve the right to adjust your compensation agreement as their sales and productivity increase

down the road.

It sounds like you're still in the early stages of being a small business owner. At this point, both you and your newbie have to realize things could still go south. Bringing another person onboard means you're either going to win together or lose together. So, your compensation structure has to be something that will allow a new hire an existence with room for financial

advancement, while still giving the company opportunity to grow!

- Dave

MAKING TIME FOR RELAXATION

Dear Dave,

I own a company, and I make a good living and love what I do. It seems as if most of the time, though, I feel worn out and stressed. Plus, I know I'm not spending as much time with my family as I should. How do you handle this kind of situation?

- Jim

Dear Jim,

To be perfectly honest, sometimes I don't handle those situations well. I'm a lot better about it than I used to be, but after a point I had to accept the fact that putting things on a calendar—even things that should never have to be put on a calendar—is a pretty good idea.

My wife and I have to be very intentional about time for each other, as well as time for


rest, recreation and the kids. We even plan our vacations and other time off several months or more in advance. I'm the kind of guy who likes goals, no matter if they're in my personal or professional life. If I'm not intentional when I'm away from the office, chances are I'll find something work related to fill the time. So, a lot of the planning we do is my wife's efforts to protect me from myself and to protect the family from me.

But there's a good side to this type of personality too. I love tasks and thrive off

Be deliberate and intentional in every aspect of your life.

them. So, if it's work, I'm working my tail off and making sure things are done right. By the same token, if it's a personal thing, like a dinner party or a date night with my wife, I'm totally into those too. Let's relax and have some fun!

Just be deliberate and intentional in every aspect of your life, Jim. Sometimes you have to work at it to make time for things, but I've found that this makes you more focused when you need to be and appreciate everything a whole lot more.

- Dave 

Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He's authored four New York Times best-selling books: **Financial Peace**, **More Than Enough**, **The Total Money Makeover** and **EntreLeadership**. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 5 million listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Follow Dave on Twitter at @DaveRamsey and on the web at www.daveramsey.com.

The Power of Story

HOW TO USE YOUR STORY TO BECOME IRRESISTIBLY ATTRACTIVE TO BRIDES

By Stephanie Padovani

We call ourselves the “accidental” DJs. My husband, Jeff, and I were working in the corporate world. But neither one of us was made for a life of high-tech machines and cold office meetings.

We were exhausted from working long hours for someone else. We dreamed of making enough money not just to pay our bills, but to actually have some fun and spend time with our family. We wanted freedom. We both loved music and working with people, and Jeff had been a professional musician for years. Why couldn't we make money with music?

One day we had this crazy idea to start a DJ business. A co-worker of ours sold us a complete DJ rig, and our business was born! That's just the beginning of the story of how we started our wedding business. Even though it's our story, it may seem familiar because it's likely you were in our shoes when you started out.

STORY TIME

By telling our story, I'm forming a connection with you based on the things we have in common: a DJ business, a love of music, a desire for freedom in our lives, and the dreaded “day job.” A good story gets your attention, draws you in, and makes you want more, whether it's the latest news flash, a popular movie, or neighborhood gossip. If you want to attract female clients, brides in particular, you're going to have to tell a story that engages them.

Women want to connect through stories, and storytelling is vital when it comes to getting women to buy. (This comes from studies cited in *Don't Think Pink: What Really Makes Women Buy* by Lisa Johnson and Andra Learned.)

All stories are naturally attractive to us as humans, but the most powerful story is the one that is somehow our story, too. That's why fairy tales and iconic stories like *Star Wars* are so popular; we find ourselves in them.

What is your bride's story? If you can tell the bride a story that describes her problem or desire better than she can, it not

only connects with her, she's also going to assume you have exactly the solution she needs.

Not a bad set up when it comes to booking a wedding, eh?

THE “I'M JUST LIKE YOU STORY”

Your ideal couples have a story in common. Sure, they grew up in different towns and have their own set of parental issues, but there is some universal “wedding planning” story they all share. It might be the fear they'll encounter a DJ horror story at their wedding. Or they may be dreaming about that unforgettable Grand Entrance.

Your ideal bride has a particular problem she's trying to solve, and that's a part of her story. If you can uncover her story and tell it in a way that reaches her, it creates an instant connection and you'll have her at, “Once upon a time...”

THE ELEMENTS OF STORY

Every story has a beginning, middle and an end. Your story should follow this arc:

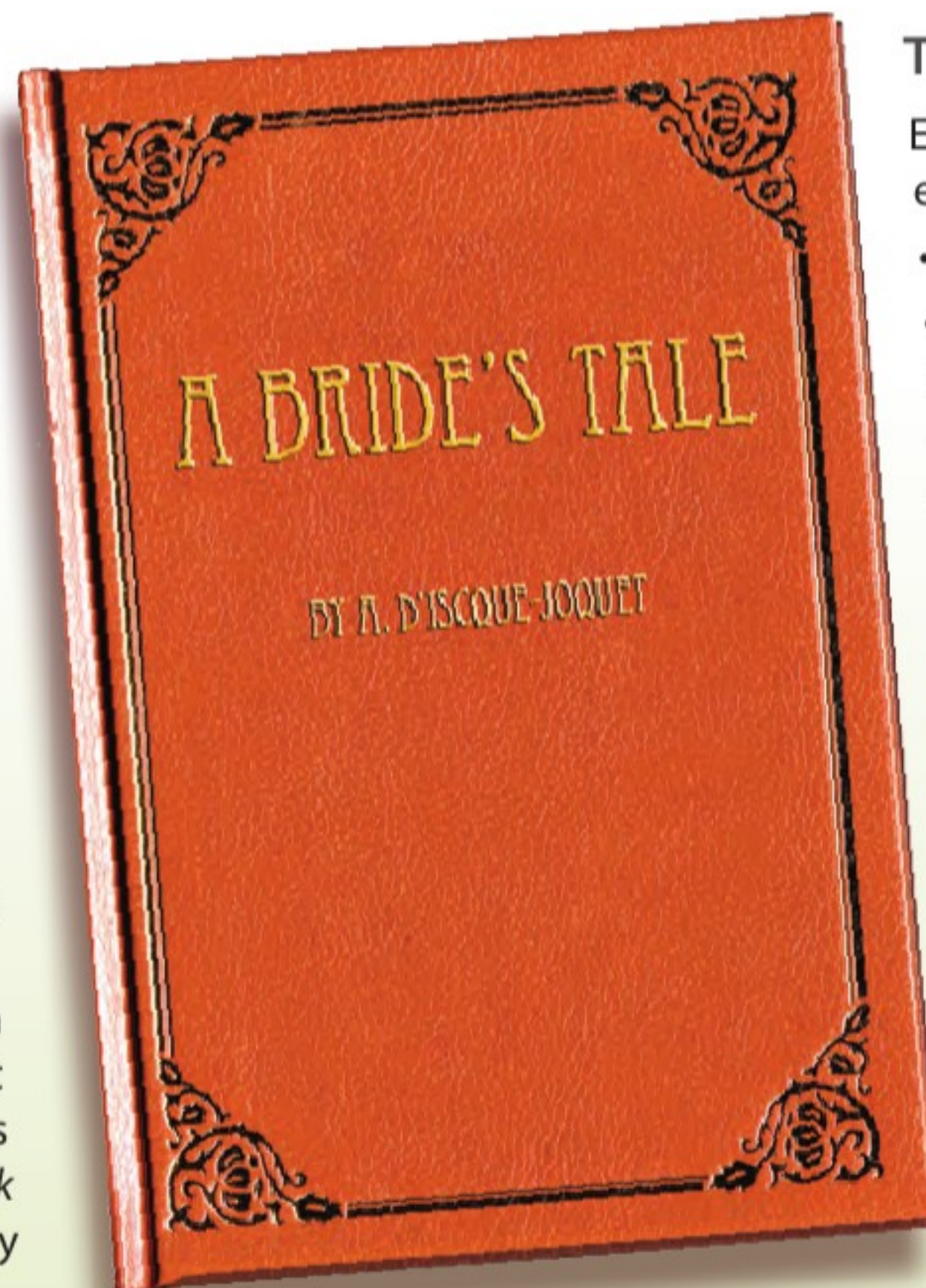
- Beginning - Things were going great.
- Middle - Things started to go wrong, and got worse.
- End - I found the solution...or didn't find the solution, but it inspired my business.

Your story needs to be broad enough to relate to all your ideal couples, yet narrow enough to exclude the couples you don't want. For example, let's say your niche is the alternative bride. It would be too specific to say, “I wanted a leopard spotted wedding gown,” because it's a very rare bride indeed who wears spots. However, if you say, “I wanted a really unusual wedding dress no one had ever seen before,” and that's how your alternative brides feel, it will connect immediately.

The most powerful way to tell your bride's story is to tell it as your own. If you were a bride yourself, or if you married one and found yourself in a situation that's relatable to your couples, that's perfect. If you don't have a story that matches the story of your ideal bride or groom, tell the story of a friend or a past bride. It will still help you connect. Which brings us to one final, important point...

Your story must be true.

Feel free to embellish a little to enhance the storytelling, but make sure it passes a fact check. There's nothing worse than getting caught in a lie, and you WILL get caught. Once you have a compelling story that connects with your ideal couples, tell it in your meetings, on your website, and in all your marketing. It makes you irresistibly attractive to the couples you really want to work with, repels the ones you don't want, and makes booking those weddings even easier. **ME**



Stephanie Padovani is a Hudson Valley, NY wedding blogger, writer and wedding business coach who has owned a successful wedding entertainment company with her husband since 2000. They started Book More Brides to help wedding professionals build thriving wedding businesses... without fighting about price or wasting money on expensive advertising that doesn't work. Visit BookMoreBrides.com to get more wedding business marketing tips.

Behind and Beyond the Sales Pitch...

TIMING IS EVERYTHING!

By Jeffrey Gitomer

As a collector of sports memorabilia, I'm on a bunch of mailing lists. Most of the offers I get are for items I can buy almost anywhere—except for the offers from Steiner Sports.

Here's their typical email after a big game or event:

From: SteinerSports.com <email@email.steinersports.com> Date: October 28, 2012, 1:02:24 AM EDT

To: Jeffrey Gitomer <gitomer@gitomer.com>

Subject: Notre Dame Remains Unbeaten After Huge Win at Oklahoma!

Notre Dame just keeps on rolling, and in the process is making a convincing argument as one of the best teams in the nation! After knocking off a very good Oklahoma team on the road, ND has conquered every challenge thus far this season, and remains unbeaten as the calendar rolls into November!

To celebrate ND's return to greatness, click here for five great Notre Dame values! All are available for a very limited time only – limit one per customer! Brian Kelly Autographed "Go Irish" Notre Dame Running On To The Field Horizontal 8x10 Photo.

Brandon

Notre Dame Wins. So what? Let me tell you what...

1. Look closely at the time stamp on the email. 1:02:24 AM EDT. It was sent less than two hours after the game was over. That's ON TOP OF IT. How quickly do you respond to the opportunity for a sale?

2. He was ready for the opportunity with a story, inventory, and a "special offer." And what do you bet that if Oklahoma won, he'd have had an offer for them. Excellent bet. How prepared are you to make an attractive, "time sensitive" offer?

3. He strikes while the iron is blazing hot. The emotion of the Notre Dame win will reach fans when they're most likely to buy. I venture to say he has 1,000 more hot irons ready to strike when the news or the score is right. How's your timing, and what's your

offer at a time when your customer is ready and willing to buy?

4. Look at the body of his email. Steiner combines a short, personalized, compelling message with a value-based offer. You have to read it – and then, if you're a Notre Dame fan, or know one, you click to see the offer. Either way, you're not offended because the message was short, informative, and fun. Brilliant. What kind of messages are you sending your customers and how are they responding?

5. His message talks about celebrating the game, the victory, and the team, not just purchasing something. Steiner creates an emotional "reason to buy." I refer to this as beyond the sales pitch. It's engaging and attractive. What reasons to buy are you giving your customers, and how are they reacting?

6. The offer has urgency attached to it. Limited quantities and only one per customer but there is NOT a "today only" time deadline. How are your offers perceived?

6.5. Brandon Steiner is in love with his business, with his employees, with his products, with sports, with the celebrities he signs, and especially with his customers. Who and what are you in "business love" with?

MAJOR POINT OF UNDERSTANDING: Because Brandon is both a sports fan (a customer) and a vendor, he understands both the selling and buying sides of his business. How well do you understand WHY your customer buys?

MAJOR LESSON: Brandon Steiner doesn't just love his business, he LIVES his business, and he understands both timing and hustle. He doesn't just take advantage, he also JUMPS on it. What's your hustle factor?

HISTORY: Brandon Steiner is self made. He combined a street-smart upbringing in Brooklyn with a love of sports and serendipity to create the largest sports autograph company in the world. As testament to his moxie, he bought the entire original Yankee Stadium and is selling it item by item. His new book You Gotta Have Balls released last month and is already a bestseller.

REALITY: There are three kinds of people in the world:

1. People who MAKE THINGS HAPPEN.
2. People who WATCH THINGS HAPPEN.
3. People who DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING.

Brandon Steiner, and Steiner Sports, MAKE THINGS HAPPEN. Which kind of person are you?

For more info on Brandon and his new book visit www.brandonsteiner.com. If you'd like a list of the rules Brandon uses for his email offers, go to www.gitomer.com and enter the words BRANDON RULES in the GitBit box. **MB**

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Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of The Sales Bible, Customer Satisfaction is Worthless—Customer Loyalty is Priceless, The Little Red Book of Selling, The Little Red Book of Sales Answers, The Little Black Book of Connections, The Little Gold Book of YES! Attitude, The Little Green Book of Getting Your Way, The Little Platinum Book of Cha-Ching, The Little Teal Book of Trust, The Little Book of Leadership, and Social BOOM! His website, www.gitomer.com, will lead you to more information about training and seminars, or email him personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

New Year's (Business) Resolutions

WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO GROW AND SUCCEED IN 2013?

By John Stiernberg

The year 2012 is history. While many mobile entertainment companies did well, others would admit that 2012 was tough. Expenses up, revenue flat, competition fierce. Gigs cancelled or “value engineered” to lower expenses. Amidst all this, customers want more value for less money. As an industry, we came out OK. The New Year is an opportunity to reflect, plan, and start again.

DJs with business savvy will look to 2013 as a year to “re-think, re-focus, re-tool,” where frills and excess are replaced by practical solutions and common sense. What can we learn? Can we carry 2012 lessons over into 2013? Here are three New Year's business resolutions for mobile entertainment professionals, looking ahead to the growth year ahead.

Resolution 1: I will build on my strengths and delegate my weaknesses.

It is important and helpful to identify your business strengths and weaknesses. Once you understand them, what do you do next? For most people, the natural inclination is to go to work on the weaknesses.

For example, let's say you have strength in performing and event production, but weakness in the areas of accounting and finance. One approach is to drop what you are doing and learn accounting and finance: go to night school, buy the right software, practice in your spare time, and hope you get it right. After six months, you are likely to have marginally improved in finance after spending the time and money to learn the new skill. In the meantime, your other work may have suffered.

Action Tip #1: Delegation is generally a better alternative. Focus on what you do best and have other people do the same, that is, focus on what they do best. If you are weak in finance (or whatever), find an accountant or bookkeeper to pick up the slack rather than trying to become an expert in a new area yourself.

Resolution 2: I will work to understand my customers and give them what they want, plus a little more.

Your customers (anyone who hires you, whether direct clients, producers, or event planners) have needs and expectations. They will evaluate your performance based on a set of criteria. As you develop relationships with your customers, you develop an increased understanding of what their buying criteria (why they hire you vs. anyone else) are.

There is both a risk and an opportunity here. If you fail to deliver what your customers want, they may not come back for more. Adding to the risk, they may not tell you what

went wrong, but they are likely to tell others (like prospective customers, competitors, or the press). If you deliver slightly above their expectations, they are more likely to hire you again, and also more likely to tell others about you.

Action Tip #2: Get a clear and renewed understanding of your customers—how they make decisions based on a unique set of creative and business needs. Then, deliver a little more than their expectations in order to keep them coming back.

Resolution 3: I will understand my competitors and differentiate myself from them.

Here's a harsh reality of business. If you are exactly like your competitors, then either lowest price or closest personal relationship becomes the ultimate purchase criterion. Are you just like all the rest? Are your musical and DJ chops, business approach, and technical resources just like those of every other competitor? Probably not, and hopefully you can identify where you are different and better.

The point here is that to be better, you need to be different. Being different does not necessarily mean that you are better. Yet, you can't be better just by being the same.

Action Tip #3: The first step is to analyze and understand your competition. Identify your top five competitors in each relevant category, including their strengths and weaknesses. List the similarities and differences between you and your competitors and focus on promoting the positive differences in your marketing plan.

HERE'S THE POINT...

Planning and focus are critical success factors in 2012.

Be sure to implement the Action Tips in sequence: 1) analyze your strengths and weaknesses to determine what you can delegate, 2) analyze your customers so you can plan to exceed their expectations, and 3) analyze your competitors so you can promote positive differences. The renewed focus on your company, your customers, and your competition will inspire you and build your confidence in the New Year.

Do the three resolutions above sound like common sense? Hopefully the answer is “yes”. The idea here is to reinforce what you already know so you can apply it to your mobile entertainment business with confidence. The good news is that there are no gimmicks in business. Your mastery of the basics puts you a step ahead on the road to success.

Here's to a great new year. Make it your best ever!

Next time we'll return to the theme of showcase events tied to publicity and social media. In the meantime, best wishes for success in mobile entertainment in 2012! **MB**



John Stiernberg is founder and principal consultant with Stiernberg Consulting (www.stiernberg.com). John has over 25 years experience in the music and entertainment technology field, and currently works with audio and music companies and others on strategic planning and market development. His book *Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters* is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at john@stiernberg.com, or on LinkedIn and Facebook. Follow him at <http://twitter.com/JohnStiernberg>.



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Reading

THE POWER OF WORDS TO TRANSFORM

By Jason Weldon



Back in the September issue, John Stiernberg had a great article about planning your operation. The plan is so important for not only your current operation, but for where you want to be in future. I wanted to help that process along by giving you some advice on ways to implement some of that planning. And it really is simple advice. Reading.

Along with many of my successful peers, I believe that reading is the number one way to not only help the growth of your business, but also to grow your mind. The smarter you are, the better decisions you can make. And that ultimately makes you a better business owner.

My reading fascination started when another industry professional told me to read a particular book. And I have to admit, I hated reading. I was always one of the people that didn't have enough time to read, or claimed that I didn't get anything out of it. It took me a long time each week to just start getting in the habit of wanting to read. But after reading this one book, I was addicted. The book was *The E-Myth*, by Michael E. Gerber.

After reading John's

article, I immediately thought that people should follow that up by reading this book. And then to continue down the list of great books that are written on business organization, operation and leadership. Reading *The E-Myth* will do a lot to help clear up many of the questions entrepreneurs have about running their businesses, but it will also help you get in the habit of reading. It is an easy book, written in a great format that makes it easy for you to finish the book and implement its suggestions.

The one big trick to reading is making notes. You have to read with a highlighter and make sure to mark what you want to remember. After you are done reading the book, you need to go back and do a book report based on all the sections you highlighted. Yup, just like high school. The biggest benefit for this is when you need to "re-visit" the book, you can just read the book report and not the whole book. Make sure to do book reports on EVERY book you read!

Many people like to listen to audio books. But this is one of the reasons why

I don't like an audio book as much as a real book. Although there are tons of arguments for both options, a real book not only allows you to take notes, but it also makes you stop what you are doing and concentrate on just reading. And I think we could all use a little time away from the real world every week.

Once you get into a system of reading, don't just limit yourself to books. Start to read other publications as well. But here's the hint. Read publications you like! The whole point of reading is to educate yourself. So if you don't like what you are reading, what's the point?! When it comes to books, you are going to pick some real losers. I would say two out of every five books will actually be a good one. But please, always finish them, no matter how bad. You never know when you will get a nugget of knowledge at some point in a book.

Last but not least, make sure to let other people know about the good books you have read. It's kind of an unspoken rule: Pass good books on! The most successful people in life are always open to sharing with other people about how they did and the mistakes to avoid. Share the books you read with other professionals so that they can be better business owners! Just like that business owner did for me so many years ago... **MB**

Jason Weldon is a wedding business consultant who specializes in small to medium-sized companies that want to grow their business. His objective is to help guide people through organizing their thoughts and laying the groundwork for a better, more successful start up. He currently lives in Philadelphia and is also the president of Synergetic Sound and Lighting, Inc. and DJ and A/V company.



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